

KING GEORGE VI AND HIS PEOPLE



By the same Author:

THE P. M. WINSTON S. CHURCHILL
AS SEEN BY HIS ENEMIES AND FRIENDS

QUEEN WILHELMINA
MOTHER OF THE NETHERLANDS

HAAKON VII.—NORWAY'S FIGHTING KING

EDWARD BENES—A LEADER OF DEMOCRACY

CHIANG KAI-SHEK CARRIES ON

THE GENERALISSIMO CHIANG KAI-SHEK

SUNSET OVER JAPAN

ALASKAN BACKDOOR TO JAPAN

EPIC OF THE SOVIET CITIES

RESHAPING GERMANY'S FUTURE

GUARDIAN OF THE LAW

THE GLORY THAT IS GREECE

KING GEORGE VI AND HIS PEOPLE

A Tribute to Britain

By

PHILIP PANETH

With twenty-six illustrations



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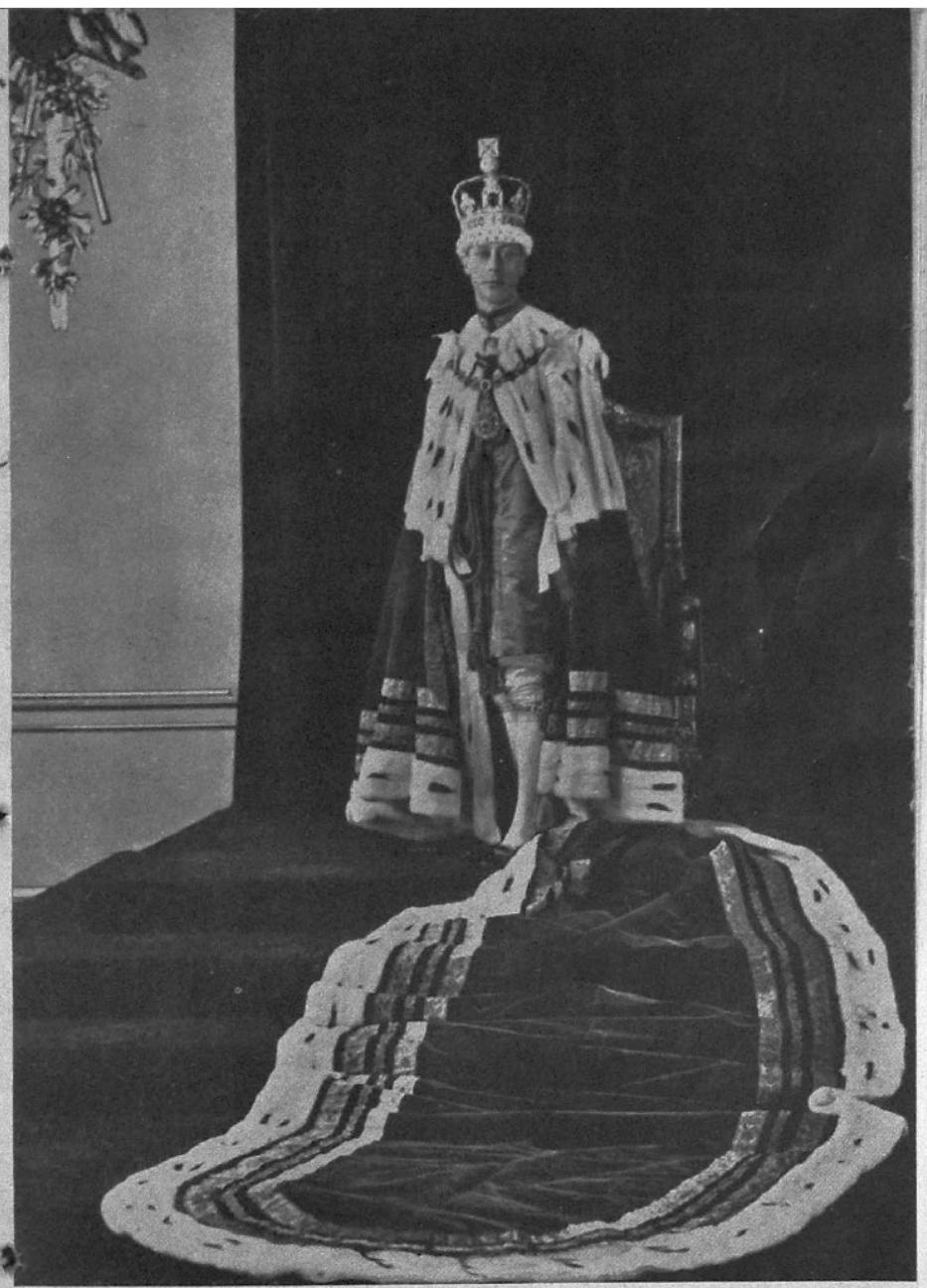
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HIS MAJESTY GEORGE THE SIXTH, KING-EMPEROR

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WITH HIS FIGHTER-PILOTS

HE HEARS HIS NIGHT-BOMBERS BRIEFED



INTRODUCTION

WHEN IN 1865, *THE GREAT QUEEN VICTORIA* first gazed upon the face of her second grandson she could not know that the infant who smiled up at her would one day be called upon not only to guide the destinies of her great Empire, but to save it from the destruction schemed and planned by her young German kinsman.

Still later, in 1895 when, her long reign drawing to its close, her second great-grandson, new born, lay before her, could she imagine that this child, second son of a second son, was in fact the instrument of repetitive history ; that he would preside, as did his father, over the great Empire when, for the second time in one generation, the British people were to be faced once more with the threat of German domination and were to fight for the very existence of that Empire ?

Like his royal father before him when he called to office a dynamic leader (David Lloyd George), whose fiery enthusiasm led the British people to victory then, so George VI was fated to summon the present Prime Minister, Winston S. Churchill, descendant of the fighting Duke of Marlborough and son of an American mother, to guide the British Empire, nay, the whole British-speaking people, in the struggle for the survival of civilized humanity.

Having noted the manner in which history has repeated itself, let us for a moment pause to study the type of man the present King-Emperor has become, this great-grandson of the Empire builder, now called upon to lead the people and to save that great Empire, rallying to him all who speak the same language—aye, and many who speak different tongues.

What is this Kingship ? What is this constitutional heritage which survives all the bludgeonings of fate ; can carry the peoples of a mighty nation forward as one in spite of all the inherent hate of the German race, whether they be led by Kaisers or Hitlers, whether their policy be that of Prussianism or any other 'ism' ? Who is this man, called to great office, who can mix with his people as one of them, has no need for battalions of troops to stand between him and the 'common herd,' yet can inspire millions of human beings throughout the world with a love and respect which it has been given to few in history to merit ?

Coming to these shores for the first time, a stranger might well ask himself these questions. In almost every other country the conditions are entirely different. In almost every other country there is need for a secret police standing between the Ruler and the people. Practically nowhere else in the world is the Head of State an integral part of the nation, as in the case in Great Britain. Here, the observant stranger is almost bewildered by the fact that no underground movement plots in secret for the removal of the Monarch. Here, he is amazed by the sight of a reigning King moving freely through a dense crowd of work-people, who in their enthusiasm press so close as to make even walking difficult.

These conditions are not accidental ; they are not fortuitous. How, then, have they come into being ? To arrive at a true explanation one must take many factors into consideration ; not only the steady growth of respect and affection bestowed upon King George by his people, but also the whole-hearted devotion to duty displayed by the Monarch and appreciated at its true value by his subjects.

It has been my good fortune, as a widely-travelled journalist, to meet and study rulers and leaders of nations in all parts of the globe. But I must confess that this King-Emperor has given me much more food for thought than any of the puppet Dictators, Emperors of tottering Empires and their like. So, as one who has only within recent years made England his home, I would like to pay my tribute to this present-day Man of Destiny and to the great Constitution he represents, in so far as this can be visualized through the eyes of one who has only just recently come under the protecting shadow of the British Flag.

PRINCE ALBERT

AT YORK COTTAGE, SANDRINGHAM, IN THE hours of the early morning of December 14th, 1895, a second son was born to the Duke and Duchess of York (who were later to become King George V and Queen Mary). The nation shared—as it always does—in the joyful sentiments of the Royal Family. But nobody then was able to foresee that the little prince would one day become the occupant of the British throne during the most fateful years in the nation's history.

That natal day was the thirty-fourth anniversary of the death of Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's beloved and never-forgotten husband, a day which had not lost its mournful significance for the Royal family. We find this entry in Queen Victoria's diary :

" Georgie's first feeling was regret that this dear child should be born on such a sad day. I have a feeling it may be a blessing for the dear little boy, and may be looked upon as a gift from God."

The early education of Prince Albert Frederick Arthur George—Bertie, to his family—was entrusted to the care of Mr. H. P. Hansell, who was also the tutor of his elder brother, Prince David, later King Edward VIII.

The education of a democratic prince who must be prepared to fill his exalted position with dignity without, however, developing the characteristics of an autocratic ruler, sets a problem of universal interest. The solution in the case of an English prince can be expressed in a simple sentence. He is brought up as an English gentleman.

During the sunny days of their early childhood at Sandringham the little princes were in close contact with many children of ordinary people without rank and social importance. This may sound quite natural in the ears of the democratic people of Britain, but it is rather surprising to the foreign visitor who knows that the sons and daughters of even petty princes abroad were usually brought up in haughty seclusion from the common herd.

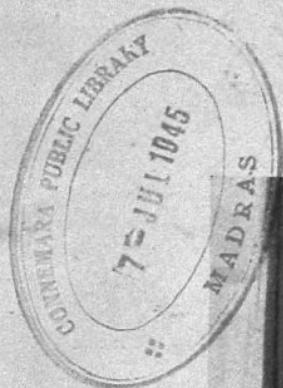
The importance of the first few years of life for the shaping of a man's character can hardly be overrated. If King Edward VIII, as well as King George VI, became, each in his own way, famous for deep understanding of the joys and sorrows of the common people, was not the foundation of this happy trait laid in the days when the little princes played football with the village children of Sandringham?

The British do not make a fetish of mental originality and brilliance. The school history-books of other countries are very fond of relating how this or that monarch exhibited the first precocious sparks of genius when he was yet hardly able to speak. No such anecdotes, as far as I know, are being told about the King. We know that he studied French under the expert guidance of Mr. Hua, who had already taught his father and had since been on the staff of Eton College for eighteen years. Prince Albert acquired a most satisfactory proficiency in that subject, so that he was later able to address the millions of his French-Canadian subjects in their own language ; but it was hardly his ambition to become an accomplished French scholar—just as his father, when a youngster, had wrestled manfully, but none too ambitiously with the intricacies of German grammar. We shall see, however, that the prince acquired a very genuine taste for serious reading—a fact which at a later stage earned him the nickname of ‘Johnson,’ after the famous lexicographer.

“*Mens sans in corpore sano.*” It need hardly be mentioned that physical training was a matter of particular attention in the education of Prince Albert. Here, again, it is typically English that much greater stress was laid upon his ability as a sportsman than on purely military prowess. He swims and plays golf, and he is a sufficiently expert tennis-player to have participated in the Wimbledon doubles with Sir Louis Greig as partner. He is also a good shot—almost as good, in fact, as his father who was famous as one of the best marksmen in England.

I do not, of course, wish to infer that the military training of Prince Albert was in any way neglected, or that it *should* be in the case of a democratic prince. Nothing, indeed, could be farther from the truth. The sailors, soldiers and airmen who are now so gallantly defending their Country and the Empire belong to ‘His Majesty’s Forces.’ The King is the ‘First Soldier’ of his country. It would be most unwise and unseemly, and it would be greatly against the traditions of the Royal House, if the King were not an accomplished soldier. But the spirit in which the military qualities of the monarchs of Great Britain were cultivated shows a marked difference from that which can be observed in many other countries, where potentates and dictators are proud to present themselves to the world as military leaders of their nations. They are, indeed, leaders of a military caste which is placed far above the civil population. The uniform separates

AND INSEPARABLE
• COMPANIONS



A FAMILY
-CONSULTATION



ROYAL CONSORTS



them from their own peoples—is it for that reason that they are fond of wearing uniform? On my many visits to Rumania (to name but one instance), I never caught a glimpse of King Ferdinand I, or his son, King Carol II, but in the full glory of their uniforms.

Not so in England. It is held necessary that the King and all male members of the Royal Family have an intimate knowledge of the duties which every able-bodied man in the country is called upon to perform in times of supreme crisis. But it is not so much the military rank of the King which matters with his subjects ; I have met many who do not even know that the King is an Admiral of the Fleet and Field Marshal. But to every man who is braving death in the defence of King and Country it is a comforting and stimulating thought that the King, from his own experience, understands and appreciates the hardships which all members of the Fighting Services have to endure.

Because it was considered unlikely that Prince Albert would succeed to the throne, it was decided, as it had been in his father's case, that he should follow a naval career. At the age of fourteen he entered the Naval Training College of Osborne as a cadet. He was given no preferential treatment. He had to perform all the duties which are the lot—a hard lot, it seems to me—of the naval cadet. He had to rise at half-past six in the morning ; he had to learn the difficult jobs of slinging and lashing up his hammock ; he was taught to sail a boat, and he was trained in the use of a sextant. It was a hard life, to be sure, far removed from the carefree days of his life at Sandringham, but a wonderful schooling in self-discipline and responsibility. He spent two further years at the college of Dartmouth, and at the beginning of 1913 he went on his first cruise in the training cruiser 'Cumberland.'

In August 1913, Prince Albert became a midshipman and was appointed to H.M.S. ' Collingwood,' a battleship. It was here he impressed (and possibly amused) his comrades by an unusual fondness for serious literature.

He was still serving on the ' Collingwood,' when war broke out.

Prince Albert's activities and achievements during the Great War were greatly influenced by the poor state of his health. But what at that time appeared to be a serious handicap, causing much heartburning to the young prince, may have been a blessing in disguise : for it forced upon him a variety of experiences

which proved to be of the greatest value to him in later years, and it gave him the first opportunity to display the iron self-control and determination which make him an outstanding personality.

But to return. He had to undergo an operation for appendicitis in the autumn of 1914 and was unable to rejoin the 'Collingwood' before February 1915. He fell ill again in November of the same year, but in May 1915, when the 'Collingwood' took part in the battle of Jutland, he was, then a sub-lieutenant, second turret officer in one of the heavy-gun turrets. The 'Collingwood' was attacked by enemy destroyers, and Prince Albert was mentioned in Sir John Jellicoe's despatch for "coolness and courage under fire."

Again, however, his health broke down. For a time, he was attached to the staff of the Naval Commander-in-Chief at Portsmouth. In May 1917, he went back aboard the 'Collingwood,' but at the end of 1917 his health finally compelled him to discontinue his life with the Grand Fleet.

Without hesitation, Prince Albert joined the Royal Naval Air Force at Cranwell and when, on April 1st, 1918, the Royal Air Force was formed he became a captain in this youngest service. His interest in the possibilities of the new weapon was so great that after the war he was transferred to a training squadron for instruction in flying.

His active connection with the fighting services ended when he had obtained his pilot's 'A' certificate in August, 1919.

It is hardly necessary to stress the importance of the experience which the King had gained as an officer in the war of 1914-1918, and especially significant is his commission in the Royal Air Force. At the time, flying as a weapon of war was still in its infancy. Twenty-two years later, the Royal Air Force saved the cause of liberty and civilization. In those anxious first twelve months of the Second Great War, when an ill-prepared Britain had to defend herself against the onslaught of an immensely strong enemy, when so many weapons of war were needed and so few could be supplied, fighter aircraft was chosen as the most essential weapon for the moment of crisis. It was a momentous decision, which future generations will remember with the deepest gratitude. Is it too much to assume that the King's experience, his understanding of the possibilities of air-fighting, played its part when those in charge of Britain's high strategy must have trembled under the burden of their responsibility?

After the grim realities of war, the quiet and cultured atmosphere of Cambridge University. Like so many other young officers, Prince Albert went to Cambridge in order to receive the finishing touches to his education. He was accompanied by his brother Henry ; both were members of Trinity College. We know little about Prince Albert's activities there. In appearance and behaviour he was no different from hundreds of others in this ancient seat of learning. The reticence of his nature prevented him from making many intimate friendships and it was not in his character to wish for a leading part in the University's intellectual or social life. It has been said that he took his studies—a special course in economics, history and civics—very seriously, and this is borne out by the knowledge which he has always displayed when the occasion demanded. The course lasted twelve months, during which time the Prince was frequently called to London for the performance of official functions. When he left Cambridge, it was to take his full share of the public duties which are the lot of the children of the reigning monarch.

His days of study and leisurely learning were over.

THE QUEEN'S SMILE

SHE IS A PRETTY AND CHARMING GIRL, and Bertie is a lucky fellow," was the verdict of King George V when he met his first daughter-in-law shortly after her engagement to Prince Albert.

It was the spontaneous utterance of a loving father who was known for his shrewd judgment of character and who was very conscious of the dignity and responsibility which rested on all members of the Royal Family. King George V was not only captivated by the charm of his second son's bride ; he was confident that she would perform to perfection the onerous duties that were awaiting her.

There are many people who possess natural kindness and affability, but few have the priceless gift of awakening an immediate response in the hearts of their fellow-men. It is not the words they speak nor the deeds they do that enables those fortunate few to bridge in a single moment the gulf which exists between one soul and another, while others, equally well-intentioned, must slowly add stone to stone, before they reach the goal of mutual understanding. We may call it charm, but we

mean more than just the ability to please. Charm, originally, is magic—the magic which opens at the slightest touch the door to a person's heart, just as the sorcerer's wand opens the entrance to the hidden treasure. We mean just that when we speak of Queen Elizabeth's charm.

To the superficial observer the Queen gives the impression of doing everything without effort. Natural vivacity permeates her whole attitude even on the most formal occasions and all her speeches are delivered in a way which gives them an air of spontaneity. The ease and grace of her movements, the effortless flow of her conversation, whoever may be the partner of the moment—all this fills her surroundings with an atmosphere of perfect serenity. The Queen's personality, acclaimed by an enchanted nation from the first day of her appearance in public life, has become a veritable national treasure in these grim years of war. It is not saying too much that during the tragic events of 1940, when all hearts were filled with suffering and anxiety, three things above all others brought comfort into every home : King George's quiet courage, Mr. Winston Churchill's rugged and indomitable greatness and the Queen's bravely confident infectious smile.

I have begun my observations on the Queen's personality with praise for her magical charm for, like everybody else, I have come under the spell of that radiant smile ; and yet, I do not believe that this ' Fairie Queene ' quality of her character, real though it is, can be accepted as the only or even the preponderant reason for her popularity and her success as Consort of Britain's King at this decisive moment of our history. But let us first briefly recall the events of her life before she was seen in the 'fierce light that beats upon a throne.'

Lady Elizabeth Angela Margaret Bowes-Lyon is the daughter of the 14th Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorne, the last but one of ten children. She was born on August 4th, 1900, at St. Paul's Waldenbury, in Hertfordshire. The days of her youth were spent between this very lovely country seat and the equally beautiful Glamis Castle, her father's Scottish home. Born into one of the oldest and noblest families of Scotland, whose members were numerous enough to constitute a little society of its own, she had early occasion to practise and perfect the social graces for which she had so strong a natural gift. We are told that even as a very small girl, Lady Elizabeth showed the makings of a perfect

hostess, and 'difficult' visitors were, by common agreement among the children of the household, left to her, because 'Elizabeth can talk to anyone.' She was educated at home, under the tutelage of the Countess of Strathmore herself, who appears to have been an exceptionally gifted pedagogue; for the experiment of education at home, which so often fails, succeeded well in the case of little Lady Elizabeth. At six, she knew the stories of the Bible by heart, and at ten she spoke French fluently. Her mother also taught her the rudiments of music, drawing and dancing, and particularly for the last-named art the little girl showed interest and talent. That her proficiency in other subjects was well up to school standard is evidenced by the fact that she passed without difficulties the Junior Oxford Examination.

Lady Elizabeth was fourteen years of age when war broke out. Glamis Castle was transformed into a military hospital. Hundreds of wounded soldiers were nursed back to health in the lovely castle, never to forget the hospitality and cheerfully efficient sympathy of the family whose home it was. Lady Elizabeth, assisting her mother in the care of the wounded, for the first time in her life met human suffering. There was personal tragedy, too; her brother Fergus was killed in action, and another brother, Michael, was believed dead for a long time before it became known that he was a prisoner of war in German hands. Lady Elizabeth did not lose her spirits. It was an important part of her duties to entertain and cheer the inmates of the hospital, and she did so, by all accounts, with youthful zest and no little success. But she was old enough to understand fully the fatal grimness of war, and to her inborn gaiety was added the warmth of human understanding.

In 1919 Lady Elizabeth moved to London and was presented at Court. She took part in the first 'Season' after four years of horror, when the people of Britain celebrated their victorious peace with delirious exuberance. She was one of the loveliest and gayest among the many charming débutantes, and was soon said to be 'the best dancer in London.' From then onward she never ceased to be one of the most popular figures in Society. Hers was a very bright life until, in 1921, her mother's long and serious illness cast a dark shadow upon it. She had to take her mother's place as châtelaine of Glamis Castle, with all the duties that position entailed.

It was at Glamis that she and the Duke of York met and soon

fell in love with each other. Lady Elizabeth became known to a wider public when she acted as bridesmaid to the Duke's sister, Princess Mary ; she was on that occasion by common consent said to have been the prettiest of six very pretty bridesmaids. Another year passed. Then, on January 14th, 1923, the engagement of the reigning King's second son to Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon was announced in the Court Circular.

The engagement was greeted in the country with more than usual enthusiasm. There were several reasons for this : the outstanding loveliness and charm of the young bride ; the romantic character of the engagement—it was so undoubtedly a love-match if ever there was one ; finally, perhaps, the fact that the Prince had not gone abroad to find a bride from the few remaining Royal families of Europe, but had chosen his future wife from among the King's subjects. Not, indeed, that there existed any prejudice against the Royal ladies of alien origin, most of whom have won the hearts of the British people without reserve. Yet it was somehow felt to be a compliment to the nation, well earned by its heroic stand in the Great War, that a girl born and reared on British soil was exalted to Royal dignity. In fact, an old English tradition was revived in this way. In mediaeval times sons and daughters of reigning monarchs frequently married members of the English nobility. It was the Hanoverians who stipulated that a Royal Prince could marry none but a lady of Royal rank. Queen Victoria consented to the marriage of her daughter Princess Louise to the Marquess of Lorne, and to that of her granddaughter to the Earl of Fife, by way of exception, but only King George V broke finally with the Hanoverian principle, when he announced that his younger children could choose their husbands and wives from the families of the higher ranks of the nobility.

Thus Prince Albert was the first Prince to receive the Royal consent to his marriage with a lady not of royal blood since James II, then still Duke of York, had married Anne Hyde in 1680.

The wording in which the Royal consent was given is worth quoting for those who are interested in Constitutional matters :

"Whereas by an Act of Parliament entitled 'An Act for the better regulating of the future Marriages of the Royal Family,' it is amongst other things enacted 'that no descendant of the body of His late Majesty King George II, Male or Female, shall be capable of



A VERY GRACIOUS LADY
HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH



ROYAL SYMPATHY FOR THE BOMBED-OUT

"HOW DO YOU DO, MR. MAJESTY?"



contracting matrimony without the previous consent of His Majesty, His Heirs or Successors, signified under the Great Seal.

Now know ye that we have consented and by these Presents signify Our Consent to the contracting of Matrimony between His Royal Highness Albert Frederick Arthur George, Duke of York, and the Lady Elizabeth Angela Margaret Bowes-Lyon, youngest daughter of the Right Honourable Claude George, Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorne."

The carefree days of an exceptionally happy girlhood were over. The young Duchess of York—soon fondly nicknamed ‘The Smiling Duchess’—became the steadfast companion and help-meet of a Prince who took his duties very seriously indeed and depended on his wife to assist him in his difficult task. She never failed him. Since the day of their wedding, the history of the King’s life cannot be separated from that of the Queen’s. Her qualities of vivacity and easy charm of manner were perfect complements to the King’s reticent and thoughtful nature. You will seldom hear people in this country discuss the King or the Queen ; it is always the King and Queen of whom they talk with eagerness and affection.

So much has been said about the Queen’s charm and graciousness that many people are inclined to overlook the more serious side of her character. Many portraits of the Queen were made by famous artists, and most of them—I think particularly of the fine works of art by Philip de Lászlo and Mabel Hankey—emphasize the ‘Fairie Queene’ aspect of her Majesty’s character : tender, almost ethereal beauty ; dreamy eyes which seem to look into a far-away world ; a sweet and fragrant smile. But there exists one portrait-drawing, by Sargent, of the Queen as a young girl, which is very different in character. Here the features are pretty rather than beautiful ; the outlines of nose, mouth and chin are firmly drawn ; the glance of the visible left eye—for the picture is taken in profile—is steady and a little pensive ; there is no dreamlike quality in this face, but an abundance of down-to-earth intelligence. It is the face of a young woman who knows her own mind and is well able to grasp the realities of life. This drawing, too, is a true likeness of the Queen—the truest, perhaps, of all.

Charm, beauty, womanliness, serenity—would all this have been sufficient to keep the Queen in the hearts of her subjects during the horrible years of ‘blood and toil and tears’? With a nation which is fighting and toiling for its very existence nothing

will count in the final analysis but the ability to share in the common task with courage and hard work. That famous smile would long ago have lost its magic if it had been but the smile of a human 'fairy.' But the people with their unerring instinct feel that behind the radiating cheerfulness of countenance a strong and very human soul is hidden.

Since she became Duchess of York, the Queen has shouldered innumerable duties, and she has never been known to fail. She earned the highest praise when she helped her husband loyally and tactfully during the difficult years of his struggle against his speech defect. She is the president and patroness of dozens of institutions ; that, indeed, has been the lot of Royal Personages everywhere : but unlike most of them, the Queen has always insisted on taking an active part in the causes to which she has lent her name. She is accustomed to prepare her own speeches and she would refuse to talk on any subject with which she has not acquainted herself. She is the most dutiful and understanding of mothers. In short, whatever she does is done with efficiency, good sense and realism.

It is for this reason that the Queen is the perfect embodiment of the aspirations of British womanhood. More than in any other country—the United States, perhaps, excepted—British women have taken their place as equal partners in the life of the nation. The women of Britain do not wish to be looked upon as mere adornments of life, to be admired and petted. They would not, I believe, like to be represented to the world by a Queen whose foremost quality was merely sweetness and charm. They can be proud of their achievements, and for that reason the men of Britain are justly proud of their women. Let us, by all means, be captivated by the Queen's smiling charm—we could not help it even if we wished, but let us remember that hers is the smile of an intelligent and representative British woman.

THE DUKE OF YORK AND THE EMPIRE

IT WAS IN DECEMBER, 1924, THAT THE DUKE OF York for the first time followed in the footsteps of his elder brother, the then Prince of Wales, who had already travelled widely in several parts of the Empire. Accompanied by his young and lovely wife and a small circle of good friends, he sailed from Marseilles on the 'Nulbera' on December 5th, arriving at Mombasa after a seventeen days' voyage.

The East African tour was not a state visit, and yet it was not undertaken without a political purpose. During that period of strife and unrest in Europe, it was desirable to remind the people of Great Britain of the existence of their vast Empire which they were all too inclined to take for granted. To the inhabitants of remote parts of the Empire, on the other hand, a visit by a Royal personage is always very welcome as a sign that their welfare is ever present in the mind of their Sovereign, for whom they often cherish an even more direct and personal loyalty than the citizens of the United Kingdom themselves.

The Royal party embarked on their tour in high spirits. The Duke and Duchess of York, while conscious of performing a task most beneficent to the affairs of the Empire, were also looking forward to a pleasant time of recreation and entirely new impressions, and to their first taste of that grandest of sports, the hunting of big game.

They arrived at Mombasa on the 22nd, enthusiastically welcomed not only by the white residents, but equally so by the Negroes, Indians, Arabs and Somalis who form the population of that port. The Royal travellers, accustomed to the civilized restraint and decorum of British social life, were greatly impressed by the joyful exuberance of these excitable people ; by the colourful scenery of the gaily decorated harbour ; the pattern of brilliant sunshine and deep shadows in narrow streets of the little town ; the native bazaars teeming and buzzing with life.

Perhaps the most impressive part of the welcoming ceremonies at Mombasa was an exhibition dance by natives, not only of Kenya, but also from Tanganyika and Nyasaland. It was a quaint and truly exciting performance, culminating in the dance of the famous Kilhuyu stilt-walkers who wore gilt crowns decorated with flaming candles. The exhibition dances were followed by a presentation, when the future King and Queen received a gold coin attached to a silk ribbon, and a hollowed elephant-tusk containing an Arabic address on a scroll.

Strange people, indeed ; strange scenery and strange customs. But while the Royal Prince and his wife were enjoying the spectacle, they were more than ever aware of the vast extent and deep significance of the responsibility which attaches to the Crown of Great Britain. What they had known before, they now realized with the impact of visual impression—that people of their own colour and mentality were but a small part of the many millions

who were dependent on the beneficent rule of the British Crown : All those dark men thronging the streets and little squares of Mombasa to welcome the Royal visitors were not slaves and ' savages ' : they were subjects of the King, entitled to their share of prosperity and happiness.

The stay of the Duke and Duchess at Mombasa was but brief. After the customary garden-party in the grounds of the Mombasa Sports Club for the white population, where the Duchess was particularly delighted with the luxurious beauty of the tropical vegetation, they set out for Nairobi, the capital of Kenya.

The Crown Colony of Kenya, so named after the huge Kenya Mountain, the second highest peak in Africa, is one of the most valuable possessions of the British Crown and with great possibilities for the future. It has a mixed population, for it forms a borderland between Negro and Hamite peoples. The harbour of Mombasa is suitable for ships of the largest size and is served by several big lines to Europe, South Africa, India and other countries. The wealth of Kenya rests mainly on agriculture, the chief products being coffee, maize, sisal, wheat, barley, potatoes, fruits, sugar-cane and tobacco. For cattle breeding there seem to be almost unlimited possibilities. In recent years, a number of Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany has added to the chances of development by bringing the most up-to-date ideas in small-scale industry into the country.

Before the partition of Africa amongst the colonizing European powers, the territory now belonging to Kenya Colony was part of the dominions of Zanzibar. In 1897 Sultan Ragash was prepared to grant a lease of the territory around Mombasa, including most of the rights of sovereignty, to Sir William Mackinnon, then chairman of the British India Steam Navigation Company. The Foreign Office, however, declined the offer. In the following years strong competition between British and German business concerns developed in East Africa, both sides acquiring several concessions. In 1888 a royal charter was granted to the Imperial British East Africa Company, which was lead by Sir William Mackinnon. In 1900 the boundaries between German and British East Africa were fixed.

Mackinnon's company did valuable work in the country but was not a financial success ; to its credit stand the almost complete abolition of the drink traffic and extensive road building, but it was forced to sell its property rights and assets in Africa

to the British Government for £250,000. In 1895 the country was formally transferred to the British Crown as a Protectorate.

In the same year a revolt amongst the Arab population broke out. It took ten months to subdue this rebellion, but fortunately the great, though injurious influence of the Arabs was then superseded by the civilized efficiency of the British settlers. Four years prior to the Duke of York's visit the country had become a Crown Colony.

The development of the country was closely linked with the development of its railways. The first line from Mombasa to Victoria Nyanza, through the southern part of Kenya and eastern Uganda, was completed in 1903, after years of heroic struggle against tropical heat and fever, at a cost of £5,330,000. The advantages were tremendous. The position and development of the Uganda territory were secured. The carriage of goods by man was done away with, and thus a death blow was dealt to the slave trade, the curse of East Africa. A vast expanse of supremely fertile land was discovered on the high inland plateaux where the climate was highly suitable to settlement by Europeans.

In 1911-1912 two new lines were built : to Magadisoda Lake, and from Nairobi to the Thika river. In 1916 a strategic railway, 92 miles in length, was built from Voi, via Taveta, to Kahe in (then) German East Africa. In 1921, finally, a line from Nakuru to Eldoret on the Uasin Gishu plateau, with branches to the Uganda frontier and the Nile, was constructed. The length of this railway is 350 miles, the cost was £2,000,000.

All these facts, and many more, must have become known to the Duke in the course of his studies. But now for the first time he had occasion to add personal experience to abstract knowledge. He saw the big ships in Mombasa harbour, he talked to the people in whose hands the administration of the country and its economic organization rested, and when, all social functions at Nairobi completed, on Boxing Day the Royal party boarded a train for Isiolo on a shooting expedition, they could already look back on experience which had greatly added to their understanding of Imperial affairs.

The shooting expedition proved an exciting adventure during which the Duke was twice in danger of his life. Once, accompanied by only one white hunter, he encountered a rhinoceros which he shot and wounded. The infuriated animal charged him,

and only when it was within thirty yards did the Duke fire a second shot, this time with deadly effect.

A few days later, His Royal Highness wounded a lioness which immediately hid in a scrub nearby. The dogs, instead of driving out the lioness as intended, unexpectedly roused two buffaloes which, coming from two sides, charged the hunters. The Duke killed both animals with two shots in rapid succession.

A fishing expedition, with two hundred black porters, to the River Uaso Nyiro ; some smaller expeditions and *safaris* ; more than six weeks of an exciting, adventurous holiday, from which the Duke and Duchess returned sunburned and fit, to resume once more official functions in Nairobi, the capital. The programme which had been mapped out for Kenya was cut short by the death of Sir Robert Corydon, the Governor of Kenya, whose funeral took place, in the presence of the Duke, on February 11th, 1925. Sir Robert had won a high reputation during a critical period for East Africa. General Smuts lamented his death as a great loss for Africa, and King George V., in recognition of his merits, ordered six days of mourning. An empire builder in the tradition of intensely idealistic Cecil Rhodes, Sir Robert Corydon was one of those men whose life explains the fact that the sons of Britain, seemingly so ordinary at first sight, have been among the most successful Colonial administrators known to history.

After a few days of welcome rest, as guests of Lord and Lady Francis Scott at Rangai, the Royal Party left Kenya Colony to begin their visit to Uganda.

In the Protectorate of Uganda, Western civilization was even farther away than in Kenya ; the scenery was even more picturesque ; sport even more exciting ; and the welcome by the native population, if possible, more wildly enthusiastic.

The colonization of Uganda had not been easy. Several times the British Government had contemplated the abandonment of the task, disheartened by the continuous warfare in which the native inhabitants seemed to delight. Even when eventually a Protectorate was declared in 1894, the history of Uganda continued to be a stormy one for a number of years.

Now, however, Uganda is a peaceful and prosperous colonial possession, with good rail and air communications ; the chief export is cotton, while other products are coffee, oilseeds and tobacco.

The Duke and Duchess were charmed by the friendliness of the negroes whom British rule had made an industrious and peaceful people. They visited Entebbe, the seat of the British Government in Uganda, where they arrived on S.S. "Clement Hill," accompanied by a flotilla of more than two hundred war-canoes. They admired the admirably planned little town with its remarkable botanical garden, but even more interesting was the visit to the native capital, Kampala. Like Rome, this African town is built on seven hills, two of which are crowned by the imposing buildings of the English Cathedral and the Roman Catholic Mission. Not long ago Kampala was but a ramshackle old village ; now it can boast of wide, clean streets and many modern buildings.

The native king of the Baganda people has his residence on Menge Hill which is also the seat of the native parliament, the Lukiki.

One of the most striking personalities whom the Duke and Duchess met on their East African tour was the *Kabaka* of the Buganda people, King Daudi. He had ascended his native throne when he was a little boy of four. Educated by the Church Missionary Society, he showed very early remarkable intelligence. His English was already perfect when, shortly prior to the outbreak of the Great War, he visited England. The experience of his visit, the overwhelming impressions which he received of British civilization, the friendliness that was shown to him from all sides, strengthened his loyalty to his white Overlord, and he proved this loyalty by taking a very active and successful part in the campaign against the Germans in East Africa.

The Duke and Duchess of York paid an official visit to this remarkable ruler in order to invest him with the insignia of the K.C.M.G. They were charmingly received by King Daudi and his Queen, who had arranged for a most impressive review of native warriors especially selected for the occasion from all the tribes in King Daudi's kingdom. The Royal party then returned to Entebbe. More ceremonial functions, more cross-country travels and shooting expeditions followed. The future Queen triumphed during one of the latter, when she brought down a magnificent specimen of the red buffalo. She seemed to delight in the rough life and the adventures which are inseparable from expeditions of this kind.

After a leisurely trip down the Nile they arrived at Khartoum

on April 7th, and once again inspection of troops, receptions and other formalities had to be performed.

During the journey through the Suez Canal on the homeward journey they saw the awe-inspiring spectacle of a sand-storm sweeping the surrounding desert—the impressive farewell of the Dark Continent to the Royal visitors who had spent so many happy hours on its soil.

The Duke and Duchess arrived back in London on April 20th, 1925. Two days later, the Duke made an appeal in *The Times*, asking the nation's support for the Empire Exhibition. No doubt the appeal carried greater influence because of the experience which the Duke had gained during the months of his unofficial but nevertheless most instructive visit to some of the outposts of the Empire.

On May 12th, His Royal Highness opened the second term of the Wembley Empire Exhibition whose success was very near to his heart. The Exhibition not only afforded an opportunity of gaining a fuller and more extensive knowledge of the products and other characteristics of the Empire—it also brought him into frequent and personal contact with leading men from various parts of the world ; and the Duke followed the wise example of his father, King George V, in never neglecting an opportunity, when it was possible to gain first-hand information on the problems of an Empire country.

The Duchess of York assisted him in every way. She took an especial interest in the Women's Section of the Empire Exhibition and her peculiar talent for making immediate and friendly contact with any sort of stranger helped greatly to obtain the frank expression of viewpoints which might otherwise have remained unspoken.

It was at a function at the Australian and New Zealand Luncheon Club that the Duke gave the first hint of his intended visit to Australia and New Zealand, when he expressed his hope that he might some day be able to enjoy the world-famous hospitality of those countries, jokingly declaring himself unwilling to leave all first-hand acquaintance with the Empire to his elder brother.

The hope became reality in 1927. It was an official State visit. Its main purpose was the opening of the Parliament House by the Duke in Australia's new capital, Canberra.

The political importance of the tour can hardly be exaggerated.

The Duke and Duchess of York had already shown their ability for making an immediate and strongly favourable impression on the inhabitants of remote parts of the Empire, and the relationship between the Dominions, Australia in particular, needed a 'tonic' of this kind rather badly; for the prestige of Great Britain stood not as high as could be wished at that time.

Political differences of opinion, it is true, had been settled in the previous year by the Imperial Conference of 1926. On the other hand the Dominions looked in vain for inspiration and initiative to the Old Country which, or so they began to believe, was really 'growing old.' That appeared to be particularly evident in the economic field. In the years after the war I had frequently encountered impatient complaints on the part of Empire business men. But I prefer to let an acknowledged expert on Empire affairs speak. This is how Mr. B. K. Long describes the situation: "In 1914 Great Britain still led the industrial world . . . Now, in many fields of industrial production, Britain is not in advance of her competitors. If a Dominion air-traffic company wants to buy machines, its first impulse usually is still to order them from a British manufacturer; but it is likely to find that machines to meet its requirements cannot be bought in the United Kingdom, have to be specially designed, and cannot be delivered within a reasonable time. Along comes an American or Belgian or even a German competitor, offering exactly what the company wants and promising delivery on a definite date not many months ahead. Reluctantly the company places the order outside the Empire."

Incidents of this description, if recurring frequently, are apt to cause a good deal of irritation. 'Colonials' sometimes felt that people in the United Kingdom simply did not care for the improvement of Imperial relations (although the reasons for Britain's comparative failure in industrial development had, of course, very different foundations). Under the circumstances, the visit of the Duke and Duchess of York had a particularly wholesome effect.

It is significant that the only critical remarks which were uttered in any of the Dominion newspapers concerned the fact that the Duke was not left sufficient time to study the industries of the country as thoroughly as one should have wished. The Duke himself regretted the fact greatly, and he declared on his arrival at Melbourne: "I wish there was longer time for me to

see more of the agricultural and manufacturing industries. I take the liveliest interest in all that concerns industry, and industrial life, especially in all that relates to improvement of housing and working conditions."

But the insufficiency of time could not be avoided. The Royal tour was designed to be mainly a political function. The programme was so strenuous that the Duchess, much against her inclination, had to abandon part of it while they stayed in New Zealand.

This Royal tour has often been described in detail ; I need not mention all the countless official functions performed by the Royal couple, or the occasional interludes of leisurely sightseeing or sport. The Duke and Duchess were ' mobbed ' by the population wherever they went ; reporters disagree whether Melbourne or Sydney hold the record for enthusiasm.

Particularly impressive was the welcome accorded to the visitors by the Maoris of New Zealand. The Maoris, perhaps more than any other race, bear witness to British colonizing genius. Originally they were almost unbelievably ferocious, head hunters and cannibals. Now they live side by side with the white inhabitants, a proud and intelligent people with many pleasant traits of character. In the last war as well as the present they have shown not only their loyalty to the Crown, but also their superb fighting qualities. A message of welcome addressed to the Duke by a Maori Chief is worth quoting for its originality : " Welcome ! Welcome ! Welcome ! Son, welcome ! Second of that name which your Royal Father bore to this distant land a generation ago, welcome ! Thrice has Royalty deigned to honour our courtyard, to enter our humble house and to walk among us. It is good ! "

" Thus is filled that word which we spoke on this ground to your elder brother, that those who govern this far-flung Empire should walk and talk with its peoples in all its several parts, and so understand and be understood of them. Come, then, in that spirit of trust, wherein England appeals to the ears of all races, knitting them surely together, in peace and goodwill.

" Welcome, the Messenger of the Era to be, when space and distance may be made of small account, when words and works may encircle the globe—as does the sun—so that no part of the Empire may brood in gloom and there conspire evil."

The State Opening of the Federal Parliament took place at

Canberra on May 9th, 1927. It was an impressive ceremony. More than twenty thousand people had gathered to welcome the Duke and Duchess. Overhead, in a cloudless sky of the deepest blue, circled aeroplanes in honour of the Royal visitors.

After a drive through the streets of Canberra in an open carriage drawn by four horses, the Duke was greeted at the doors of Parliament House by the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth and by the Governor-General. He was handed a golden key with which to open the door. Dame Nellie Melba, 'the Australian Nightingale,' sang a verse of the National Anthem. The Prime Minister addressed the Duke, who replied briefly and opened the door with the golden key. All entered the building, and the Duke unveiled a statue of King George V. In the Senate, the Duke and Duchess were seated on two thrones in the forefront of the platform. The Duke's Commission to open the first meeting of Parliament in Canberra was read. Then the Duke delivered his speech in which the following passage occurred:

"One of the great needs to-day, and perhaps the greatest need of all, is the better understanding of one another, both between the different parts of the Empire and also between the different interests—Capital and Labour, employers and employed, town and country—in the various countries themselves. It is only by getting to know one another better that this closer sympathy and understanding can come. Only so can we realize that we are all members of one family, whose interests are inseparably bound up with one another, possessing the same traditions, animated by the same ideals, imbued with the same faith. This is the message I would bring. It is right that we should be loyal to our family, to our city, to our State, to our country, but let us not forget the wider patriotism, the loyalty we all owe to the British Commonwealth—the great family of British nations, in the preservation of which, and of the ideals and principle for which it stands, lies in my opinion the best hope of peace in the world to-day."

In his farewell message the Duke said: "The purpose of our mission has been fulfilled and it will always be amongst the proudest memories of my life that I was called upon as the representative of His Majesty the King to perform the ceremony of inauguration of the new Capital city of Canberra."

The purpose of his mission had been fulfilled in every sense. The memory of the Royal visit is still fresh and alive in many a home of Australia and New Zealand.

KING OF GREAT BRITAIN

" . . . Royalty is a government in which the attention of the nation is concentrated on one person doing interesting actions. A Republic is a government in which that attention is divided between many, who are all doing uninteresting actions. Accordingly so long as the human heart is strong and the human reason weak Royalty will be strong . . . "

THese lines, a curious quotation, were written more than sixty years ago by Walter Bagehot, a well-known authority on Constitutional Law. They express quite admirably a point of view which is now prevalent among political thinkers in the continents of Europe and America : the appeal of Monarchy is almost exclusively sentimental ; the more general the political education of the masses becomes, the more they will rely on reason and understanding and the position of monarchies will weaken accordingly.

To a certain extent substance has been given to that contention by the history of the last decades. I must admit that, if some years ago someone had asked me whether I believed in a future for monarchial ideas anywhere, I should have firmly replied in the negative. I had observed the fate of many dynasties. I had seen some of them swept away by the tempestuous events of war and social revolution, with hardly a trace left of their former glory. I had seen heirs to ancient thrones in the undignified position of mere puppets, who were made to dance at the will of an upstart dictator. I have been acquainted with Royal Courts which had become hotbeds of cheap political intrigue and corruption.

True, I had also met monarchs—in Holland, for instance and the Scandinavian countries—who were on the very best terms with their peoples, inviting respect rather than criticism by all standards. On the whole, however, I, like so many others, had no doubt that the idea of kingship was irrevocably dying out in Western civilization ; at best it might be kept alive for a short time as a lovable anachronism, a piece of pageantry recalling the highlights of a nation's history, but as a matter of no political importance.

Contemplating, however, in the light of recent events the part being played by Great Britain on the stage of world affairs, I

found myself compelled to study with greater thoroughness the character and dynamics of the British Monarchy and I revised completely my former generalizing attitude. I was impressed by the unanimous approval with which the Monarchy was considered by all classes of the population ; I appreciated more fully its enormous psychological value (of which I will say more later in this book) ; but I also began to understand that the British nation had developed, in her system of Constitutional Monarchy, one of the finest tools of political craftsmanship. Indeed, I feel almost tempted to reverse Mr. Bagehot's dictum, quoted at the beginning of this chapter ; for it was an enthusiastic, but quite unreasonable faith in the efficacy of modern political machinery which caused other nations to fling valuable traditions on the rubbish heap ; while the British nation, refusing to obey the prevalent mood of the age and preferring to adapt its political inheritance to the needs of the day instead of parting with it altogether, displayed much greater maturity and wisdom.

Adapting tradition to the needs of the day : that, of course, is the very essence of the British nation's political genius. To demonstrate how well she has succeeded is one of the main objects of this book.

What, then, is the character of the British Monarchy ? Which, to begin with, are the legal foundations on which the King's authority is based ?

If we go back to the early history of England we find established elective monarchies with a mingling of hereditary principles. The Anglo-Saxon kings were elected by the 'Council of Wise Men,' the *Witenagemot* or *Witan*. It was customary to choose a successor from the family of the last king, but there were no firm rules of succession as we know them to-day, and sometimes the royal line was completely passed over. The coronation gave religious sanction to the accession, and symbolized the compact between the king and his people. Even William the Conqueror, who based his title on the right of conquest, had himself elected by the *Witan*—though that procedure bears a curious resemblance to the plebiscites after a *fait accompli* so beloved by modern dictators.

With the advent of feudalism, however, the importance of election and coronation diminished, both in England and elsewhere, and the absolute principle of hereditary right gained a foothold. But while on the whole the doctrine prevailed until

the beginning of the eighteenth century, Parliament, its authority once established, never quite lost control over the title to the Crown, several times asserting its right to regulate the succession. It did so finally in the Act of Settlement of 1701, from which the present King's title to the Crown is derived, for the Act settled the Crown on Sophia, widow of the Elector of Hanover, and 'the heirs of her body being Protestant.'

Thus we have now a Hereditary Monarchy, subject, however, to the undoubted sovereignty of Parliament, for 'the King in Parliament may alter the succession.' As for the Coronation—well, none who spent the heart-warming days of May 1937 amidst British people will admit that the spiritual sanction of the King's power is anything other than deeply significant and vital to the mind of the British citizen.

Less easily defined than the King's right to the throne are his actual powers according to Constitutional Law. In other countries a Constitution is understood to be the basic statute, setting out in black and white, so as to be comprehensible to every citizen of average intelligence and education, the principles which govern the rights of individuals and the functions of the State. In this country, the Constitution is but the sum-total of countless legal traditions, statutes and ancient usages, an enormous tangle of sometimes conflicting rules which have never been brought into a comprehensive system. Only those who are very learned in the law (and I am not) can feel sure of their ground when wandering in the gigantic maze of constitutional rules; and even experts are content to put up with many obscurities and uncertainties which would be a nightmare to the abstract and logical mind of, let us say, a French jurist.

The powers of the Crown in particular are mainly based on usage, to be understood only in the light of historical development 'from precedent to precedent.' But what the law lacks in clarity, it gains in elasticity. The absence of any systematization, though it makes life harder for the student of political science, is in many respects of the greatest practical advantage.

It is not too much to say that the internal history of England consists very largely of the struggles which were waged over the extent of the Royal prerogative. The Saxon kings fought for their power with the Witenagemot. The Plantagenets lost part of their authority to the rebellious barons. The forceful personalities of the great Tudor monarchs achieved almost complete

autocracy. The Stuarts, misjudging the trend of history, lost the throne in their bitter struggles with Parliament and the Common Law Courts. George III, of unhappy memory, quarrelled incessantly with his Cabinets, much to the detriment of the Nation's interests.

From that time, the powers of the Sovereign ceased to be an object of serious controversy ; during the long and eminently successful reign of Queen Victoria the rights and duties of the monarch were consolidated within the limits which we have to-day. There were other constitutional issues : the House of Commons asserted, after years of bitter strife, its ascendancy over the House of Lords, and in recent years the growing legislative activities of government departments—‘The New Despotism,’ as it was called—have become the subjects of much discussion. But the position of the King’s person remained untouched.

If we glance into any textbook on Constitutional Law we find that the highest political and judicial functions are vested in the Crown—or perhaps it would be better to say that these functions are endowed with the dignity and authority of Royal acts. I do not propose to venture into the intricate details of the law, but the most important elements of the Royal Prerogative must be briefly mentioned.

The King is the ‘Fountain of Justice’ : he appoints judges ; defendants are summoned to the King’s Courts by command of the King ; the Crown, and the Crown only, can stifle a prosecution, by the procedure of *nolle prosequi* or simply by declining to offer evidence ; it is the King’s power to grant or refuse pardon to people convicted by the Courts.

The King is also the ‘Fountain of Honour’ : he grants orders and decorations ; he bestows titles of nobility and gentility ; he can create Peers of the Realm.

Every officer in the three Services holds his commission from the King as the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces.

The ‘King in Parliament’ gives the Royal Assent to Bills which have been passed by both Houses ; he can summon, prorogue and dissolve Parliament.

Bishops and other high dignitaries of the Church are appointed by the King, who is the Governor of the Established Church.

The King is the representative of the nation in all international affairs : his is the right of making war and peace ; of recognizing foreign States and governments ; of making treaties and of

appointing ambassadorial agents of the United Kingdom abroad, and of receiving representatives of foreign governments at his Court.

Lastly, if we leave out countless functions of minor importance, there is the King's duty to appoint the Prime Minister, who in turn chooses his ministerial colleagues. It is the leader of the dominant party who has a claim to be summoned to the King's palace for the 'kissing of hands'; the subordinate ministers recommended by the new Premier also receive their seals of office from the King in person.

The action of the King in appointing a Prime Minister is therefore, as a rule, purely formal. He has no free choice, but is bound by constitutional rules. The same applies to all the other privileges which I have mentioned. The principle appears to be this: that while certain State acts should be done in the King's name, and sometimes with the formal participation of the King, he should stay removed from political and legal controversy. 'The King can do no wrong'; he cannot be made responsible for acts committed on the authority of the Royal prerogative by the servants of the Crown. On the other hand, in order to satisfy the demands of democratic thought, the actual decision must rest with persons who have to answer for any injury or illegality committed in the King's name.

In the field of foreign politics, for instance, the King will always act on the advice of his competent, constitutional councillors, the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. It is not even considered proper for the King to receive representatives of foreign Powers save in the presence of the Foreign Secretary, or the Permanent Under-Secretary. When the Sovereign is abroad, a Diplomatic Agent or Minister should attend all conversations of a political nature.

It is thus true to say that the rights and duties of the King within the Constitution of Great Britain are mainly formalities; important formalities, it is true, but as such belonging to the 'sentimental' rather than the practical side of statecraft. There are, however, two consequences resulting from the position of the monarch which are of an eminently practical character.

Firstly, though the actions of the King are normally determined by forces outside his constitutional control, circumstances may arise, and have arisen in the past, which leave important decisions to his personal discretion. A famous instance occurred



KING—AND DEMOCRAT





HE CONFERS WITH STATESMEN OF FRANCE
AND BOARDS A DESTROYER FOR HOME



after the general election of 1922, when two men seemed to have an equal claim to the Premiership. King George V invited Mr. Bonar Law to form a government, but he would have been quite within his constitutional rights if he had chosen Lord Curzon instead.

As long as the apparatus of State is functioning smoothly, there is comparatively little scope for the active participation of the King in public affairs, as far as decisions are concerned. At the same time, circumstances can be imagined in which the personal judgment and decision of the Sovereign may be of extreme importance. The executive power of the State rests on two spiritual foundations : the will of the people as expressed by Parliament, and the traditional and religious elements of the nation's spirit, the elements which are embodied in Royalty. The latter, though clearly subordinate to the former in democratic Britain, remains a valuable safeguard of national values.

There is a second practical consequence of the King's 'formal' authority. The British, whose mind is adapted to the concrete rather than the abstract, would tolerate Monarchy as 'a mere matter of form' as little as they would tolerate an autocratic Monarchy. The King, though his powers be limited by the will of the People, is still a person of flesh and blood with high authority. The Constitution recognizes this, for while it denies him the rôle of an executor of policy, it gives him the status of a highly authoritative adviser. The relation between official parlance and the actual state of affairs is somewhat paradoxical ; officially, 'the King acts on the advice of his servants' : in reality, the Government act, but not seldom the advice of the King is asked for and given.

For that reason the King is entitled to obtain full and early information on all matters of importance. It is well known that Queen Victoria watched rather jealously over her right to be kept informed, demanding written reports of important events and vital Cabinet decisions—sometimes, it is related, rather to the annoyance of her Prime Ministers.

It is always difficult to say to what extent an individual monarch makes use of his rôle of adviser and of his opportunities to exert personal influence by the sheer force of his intimate contact with affairs and persons. There is, as a rule, no record of the advice he has given, and many acts which he has to perform in the course of his duties are done by word of mouth—as, for instance,

the invitation to form a government. It is clear that much depends on the personality of the King, the character and intelligence of his chief ministers, and on the general political atmosphere.

Generally speaking, during the reigns of Queen Victoria and her son, Edward VII, the influence of the Sovereign was conspicuous in the field of Foreign Affairs. Through their blood-relationship with many of the European monarchs the Royal Family of Great Britain had at their disposal sources of information which made their judgment particularly valuable. In Germany it was generally held that King Edward VII was the architect of the Triple Alliance or, as German writers prefer to put it, of the 'encirclement of Germany.' That is probably exaggerated. But it cannot be doubted that King Edward's intimate knowledge of German and Russian affairs and personalities, as well as his deep and sympathetic understanding of France, were factors which helped Great Britain to grasp the nature of the impending struggle. It is partly due to his political acumen and tact that his country was able to enter the field supported by powerful and steadfast allies.

Dynastic relationship is not any longer a decisive factor in European politics. In the reigns of George V and George VI we find nothing which can be compared with the activities that earned Edward VII the description of 'his own Foreign Secretary.' The reticent and almost self-effacing figure of King George VI is not linked in our minds with the events which led up to the outbreak of the Second World War. Instead, because Stanley Baldwin and Neville Chamberlain rather ostensibly monopolized the conduct of Foreign Policy—against Parliament, their own Foreign Secretaries, and the King—it is they who must be held primarily responsible for the policy which led to the catastrophe of Munich. The morass of world politics at that time was no ground on which the prestige of an ancient throne could be expected to prosper; we must be grateful that it remained unsoiled.

But in the same degree to which the affairs of Europe deteriorated, the inter-relationship between the component parts of the British Empire gained in importance. More than ever the cohesion of the Empire became of paramount interest not only to Great Britain but to the civilized world. Once again, as twenty-five years earlier, the hope of the German aggressor was fixed on

the crumbling of the British Empire at the 'first whiff of grape-shot.' Once again the hope proved false—but if the predictions of German geo-political professors had come true, the consequences would be unthinkable.

Europe was overwhelmed by the avalanche of fascism. The solidarity of the American nations was not yet an accomplished fact. But—and we can count it fortunate for the entire world—the King of Great Britain was still the King of the British Dominions beyond the Seas. The loyalty of his subjects everywhere once again stood the test of war.

AY, EVERY INCH A KING !

IT IS HELD BY MANY PEOPLE THAT THE FAULTS and virtues of a constitutional king matter but little. The business of government, they argue, is not in his hands. His personal intelligence, efficiency and courage make no difference in the life of the nation. He can make less use of them than any other man in the land. On the other hand, if he be cowardly and stupid, he cannot do much harm. There are even some qualities, such as initiative and imagination, which we would consider good points in any man, but which in his case would be a hindrance rather than assets, they argue.

These people, I believe, are quite mistaken. I have shown that even from a legal point of view the King is no mere figure-head : greater still is the influence which the personality of the King exercises in ways which cannot be defined in exact politico-legal terms. The King remains though cabinets change. He is in constant touch with all figures of national importance. He receives all vital information. The King, in short, acquires in the many years of his reign so extensive a knowledge of facts and persons that this alone would secure him influence and weight. It is true that the consequences of his actions are not always apparent at once : but we cannot doubt that a king without sense of responsibility and patriotism could do infinite harm, while a king who possesses these qualities can do his country most valuable service.

That may be true, the sceptics will say, as far as even a constitutional king has public functions to perform. Obviously an intriguer or an individual without tact and manners, or one incurably lazy would make a bad monarch. But these are

rather superficial requirements. We are thinking, continue the sceptics, of the more profound and intimate traits of character, when we state that they do not greatly matter in the life of the nation.

This view ignores the great change which recent history has wrought on the mentality of the common people. In former times, it is true, the 'theatrical' side (as the famous constitutional lawyer Walter Bagehot called it) of the monarch's life was predominant in the eyes of his subjects. Dignified and graceful bearing in the performance of his public duties, pride, tempered with courtesy, in his dealings with representatives of foreign powers, exemplary devotion to his daily tasks (the details of which were very little known)—all these were considered most important, while the moral side of the monarch's life was only of interest when it was scandalous. In those times, a wide gulf separated the governing from the governed. The ruling classes were almost a race apart, and were, to a large extent, allowed their own standard of behaviour. General education and universal franchise, however, combined with the participation of the man-in-the-street in the most important functions of public life brought about a change. The ordinary citizen, his self-respect growing with his growing responsibility, is now inclined to regard his own ethical standards as universal ; he wishes the first man in the land to conform to these standards. As the whole life of the citizen becomes ever more closely connected with public life, the State loses its character as something esoteric and within the confines of privacy ; the border-line becomes elastic. At the same time, the monarch represents not only the unity and might of the State, but he should also be a symbol of the qualities and ideals which the nation considers to be her very own.

With these facts in mind, let us consider the personality of King George VI as it is presented to us by those who have written about him.

A quiet man who likes to listen rather than to impose his own conversation. A reticent, almost shy person, who does not make friends quickly, but steadfast in his friendship with those who have won his confidence ; weighing his words carefully before they are uttered ; given to thorough deliberation before a decision is made. Simple, unaffected and very kind in manner, but not without dignity when it is appropriate. A serious reader, who does not give himself intellectual 'airs.' Of a practical,

rather than a theoretical, turn of mind, especially interested in all things mechanical. Soberly devoted to the duties of his office, but by no means devoid of a lively sense of fun. Very fond of sports and games. His hobbies : gardening and mechanical models. Above all, a most affectionate husband and a loving father, who feels happiest in the all too few delicious hours he can spend undisturbed in the circle of his family.

Later generations, no doubt, will probe deeper into the King's character. When the events of our days can be seen in their proper perspective, when archives are opened and private sources of information can be tapped freely, it will be possible to give a more thorough analysis of his personality. For the moment however, it is sufficient to know that this is a true-to-life though certainly not a complete portrait of the King's person.

A portrait of the King—but at the same time the portrait of that oft-quoted being, the Average English Gentleman. The description I have given—one which is universally accepted as true—might, with slight qualifications, fit millions of well-bred gentlemen so often to be met with on their daily journey from their suburban or country home to the city office. It is the type of British manhood accepted and looked up to by English women. To become such, boys are admonished by their parents. This kind of man, just this, the English people want their King to be. A ruler of former ages would have made a wry face had he been told that he resembled to perfection the ideal type of his 'common' subjects ; now there can be no higher praise for the democratic monarch of modern Britain.

But again the voice of the sceptic can be heard : " Do we really know that this is a true sketch of the King's character ? This is, perhaps, how it is presented to the public ; but much may be distorted by propaganda. The King's acts and words in public are not spontaneous, they are part of a routine which is forced upon him. Of the real man behind the public figure we know nothing."

These doubts, especially if expressed by a foreigner who does not know this country well, are quite natural. A sovereign is not usually the object of impartial analysis, and the platitudinous eulogies which are always showered on crowned heads by loyal but uncritical writers, cannot always be taken at their face value. So much can be admitted. But even in countries where public opinion is less free and strong than it is in Britain, the sovereign

is too much in the limelight to be able to hide his personality completely. " You cannot fool all the people all the time ! " He would be an actor of genius, indeed, who could maintain, year after year, an outward appearance differing from his real character, without the discrepancy becoming recognized by considerable sections of the community.

I have been in many countries where the Head of State was made to assume a rôle for which he was not fitted by nature ; but invariably, in spite of censorship and official propaganda, the experienced observer was quickly able to sense the true state of affairs. Invariably there are rumours and sly little jokes ; a wink here, a shrug of the shoulders there : one knows ! Nor am I necessarily referring to grave deficiencies or vices of the exalted persons concerned. No; any incongruity between the 'official' and the true character will, once suspected, invite critical and satirical comment.

I must confess that, as a confirmed journalist and therefore a doubter, I have looked for similar signs in the case of King George VI. I have found none. From the Cockney to the college-bred aristocrat, from the true-blue Tory to the ' reddest ' labour man, there is a profound conviction that this King, as they know and like him, is ' real.'

That, I think, is convincing. True, the British have learned to be extremely fond of their ruling dynasty. They are, I firmly believe, quite ready to credit a new king of the House of Windsor with all the good qualities which the members of that family have displayed. But at the same time, they are neither subservient nor uncritical, and their sense of humour is easily tickled. It seems that the King, before his succession to the throne, had made a comparatively slight impression on the public mind. It was upon the more brilliant and forceful personality of his elder brother that the interest of the nation had been focussed. The Duke of York was popular enough to have the nation's confidence when he was proclaimed King ; but if they had made a mistake, if King George VI had not proved himself to be the man they believed him to be, they would not have hesitated to proclaim the fact, in spite of their loyalty to the monarchy. The King would still have enjoyed the respect due to his station, but his personal popularity would not be as great as, in fact, it now is.

The King's amazing and ever-growing popularity ! Here is more than loyalty, more than the natural esteem for the man who

is a living symbol of so many good and truly British qualities. All which has been said does not fully account for the depth of affection which is felt for the King by untold millions of his subjects ; not only by the romantic and simple-hearted, but by all classes and conditions of his people.

I remember an evening, some years ago, when I was staying at the house of English friends. A speech by the King was being broadcast. I can recall neither the occasion nor the contents of the speech ; it was a short and simple talk, given in a simple and unassuming way ; very pleasant, in fact, but nothing to arouse my particular interest as an outsider, apart from the person of the speaker. My host and hostess were people of the world, intellectual and cosmopolitan in outlook ; surely, they had heard the King's voice often before, and I did not expect them to pay very great attention to the broadcast. But when I looked at them, I saw their eyes were fixed upon the wireless set, and that they followed the King's words with an intentness and a pleasure, as if the most intimate relationship had existed between the Royal speaker and themselves. I found no explanation for their, to me, unexplicable excitement, until some time later I was told for the first time of the King's former hesitancy of speech.

Even when he was a small boy he suffered greatly from the defect which made every sentence he had to speak a matter of labour and of hazard. The suffering grew when, as Duke of York, he was called upon to make speech after speech in public, and sometimes even private conversations became an ordeal. Specialists were called in ; hopes were raised, but disappointment followed disappointment. His natural shyness and diffidence increased of necessity. The specialists thought that nervousness was at the root of the trouble, and their diagnosis made matters worse. It has been told that in those days the King was sometimes near despair. To retire from public life altogether must have been a tempting thought for him, but he did not give up. It was shortly before his world tour in 1927 that an Australian specialist gave him renewed hope. This specialist, Mr. Lionel Logue, was certain that the King's affliction was of a purely physical character and devised his cure accordingly. Convinced that Mr. Logue had indicated the right way, the King set to work with almost unbelievable courage and determination. "He realized," says Mr. Logue, "that the will to be cured was not enough, but that it called for grit, hard work, and self-sacrifice,

all of which he gave ungrudgingly." While the official duties which he had to perform were increasing in number and complexity, he never failed to apply himself conscientiously to the schedule of exercises mapped out for him. How successful was the King's struggle the world now knows. His voice has self-assurance, his words fluency. There is little trace left of his speech-defect ; but, more remarkable still, his mind and soul remains unscarred by the gruelling experience of his years of struggle.

Another prince of modern times who had to fight a bodily defect comes to my mind : the Kaiser, who was born with a paralyzed left arm. Physically Wilhelm II overcame his handicap not without courage ; but his mind had become warped in the fight. Much of his unbalanced vanity and ambition has rightly been ascribed to an inferiority complex caused by his affliction.

To have conquered his defect as the King did, to have fought his way through to that serenity of mind which we can now observe—that shows, indeed, a rare greatness of soul. It is for this, I am certain, that the people of Britain love their King as they do, for moral bravery is always irresistible to an English heart.

Let me conclude this chapter on the King's character by recalling a sequence of pictures which appeared in the newsreels some years ago. They depicted a visit by His Majesty to a boys' camp. The King was shown in the midst of his young hosts, all obviously quite at ease in his presence. His Majesty was gay and smiling, looking young and almost boyish himself, singing with the rest, and faithfully executing the droll little gestures which accompanied some of the songs. It was a very charming picture, delighting everybody who saw it.

There are some people, I am afraid, who greet with almost ecstatic joy every sign of ordinary human behaviour in a Royal Personage, as if they had expected to find a nit-wit and a monster. That the King should enjoy himself thoroughly in the company of those very likable youngsters is pleasant to observe but not so very remarkable. It is not for that reason that I recall the pictures. There are many adult persons of high eminence who would love to spend a day in a camp and to fraternize with the boys. But how many, I wonder, would be able to behave as the King did, well knowing that every movement would be watched and commented upon, that cameras were trained on him, and that



LUNCHING FRUGALLY WITH THE AMERICAN GENERAL CLARK IN AFRICA

WITH GENERAL MONTGOMERY IN TRIPOLI



THE ONLY KING AND QUEEN IN THE WORLD REQUIRING NO ARMED GUARD





BRITAIN'S KING HAS LITTLE LEISURE



THEIR MAJESTIES'
DAUGHTERS, THE
ROYAL
PRINCESSES





THE KING GREETS HIS PEOPLE BY MICROPHONE AND IN PERSON



the little episode will be shown to millions of people all over the globe? Most people would be stiff and artificial; others, if only by slightly overstepping the borderline of good taste, would make themselves ridiculous. The King was absolutely and deliciously natural; nothing in his behaviour was forced, nothing, on the other hand, was undignified. It was the perfect poise of an unaffected gentleman. A little thing, but one which only great souls can achieve. Ay, every inch a King!

KING OF THE BRITISH DOMINIONS BEYOND THE SEAS

 **F**ALL THE PUBLIC DUTIES WHICH DEVOLVED on the King since he had become Duke of York, the most consequential were those in which he represented the Crown—admirably, as we shall see—in its relation to the peoples of the British Commonwealth of Nations. During the years following the War George VI had shown himself to be an extremely wise ruler who understood perfectly the viewpoints and aspirations of the so-called Dominions; whenever the opportunity occurred, he sounded the mind of a Dominion leader, and he assisted the development of Dominion independence with the greatest broadmindedness. He realized that in the perfection of this 'sisterhood of nations,' rather than in any Utopian scheme of theoretically-minded jurists, the key to the future happiness of mankind was to be found.

It was, therefore, in the spirit of his father, that King George VI considered it one of his primary duties to study Empire affairs, and to further whenever possible the good relationship between the Dominions and the mother country. His visit to East Africa; his presidency of the Empire Exhibition in 1915; his World Tour in 1927 and his visit to Canada, 1939, were not mere matters of formality; they were undertaken in the full knowledge that the permanence of the Empire was the essential goal which had to be achieved in spite of all difficulties. But to understand fully the importance of these matters, it is necessary to recall briefly the changes caused by the last War in the essential aspects of world politics.

The most important lesson taught by the war of 1914-1918 was this: the system of power policies based on national egotism had brought chaos; the victors suffered almost as heavily as the van-

quished. If mankind was to be saved from utter ruin, some method of international co-operation must be found.

The League of Nations was the first attempt to solve the problem on a broad basis. For a short period the experiment seemed to promise success. Under skilful leadership of men like Aristide Briand and Austen Chamberlain, with the moderate and clever Gustav Stresemann at the head of German affairs, a system of co-operation, under which the nations could settle their various disputes by peaceful means, seemed to be a possibility of the near future. We know now that not only the League experiment failed, but that it was doomed to failure from the very start. There were many reasons for that ; one was the refusal of the United States to co-operate in a scheme which, they feared, might entangle them in disputes beyond where their interests lay ; another was the failure of Great Britain and France to agree on a common policy towards Germany—Britain being inclined to follow the traditional policy of moderation towards the defeated enemy, France giving way to feelings of apprehension (not unjustified, as events have shown) and *ressentiment* ; another, and this the most decisive of all, the unwillingness of Germany to forget her dreams of world hegemony—for at the very time when the Pact of Locarno was signed the real powers of Germany, the industrialists, the junkers, the military caste, were busy with their designs to smash the Weimar Republic, to rearm Germany to the teeth, and to make good the defeat of 1918.

That all hopes based on the existence of the League of Nations, such as it was then constituted, would be completely stultified, soon became obvious. Japan, herself a member of the League, took Manchuria by force of arms from another member, China, in 1931 and 1932. In 1935 Abyssinia could not be protected against the attack of Fascist Italy. In Europe, in the meantime, the Disarmament Conference had broken down, and the advent of Nazism in Germany struck the most powerful blow against the ideal which had been welcomed with so much well-intentioned enthusiasm at the end of the Great War. The principle and practice of power policy once more reigned supreme.

While the League system of co-operation and collective security gradually broke down, the doctrine of Pan-American solidarity was being developed and, with increasing success, put into practice in the Western Hemisphere. The people of the United States had repudiated the idea of the League which their

own President, Woodrow Wilson, had created; but while they distrusted the practical consequences of the League, they were fully in accord with the underlying ideals of peaceful co-operation between free and independent states, and later, when they had found leaders like Franklin D. Roosevelt and Cordell Hull, they gave shape to this ideal in a less universal but more practical form.

In view of the many problems which must be faced and solved after the war if World Peace is to be achieved, it is of more than passing interest to examine the process by which the American Republics were linked together in unity and harmony.

I can think of no better platform from which to start for a short review of the general political position on the American Continent than the Declaration of Lima, 1938, when the principles of American Solidarity were formulated and accepted by the unanimous vote of twenty-one members of the Conference (Canada being the only American state not represented).

Similarity of democratic institutions; unshakable love of peace; deeply rooted sentiments of humanity and tolerance; unconditional adherence to the principles of International Law, of equality and sovereignty of all states, of individual liberty disowning all religious and racial prejudices; these, according to the preamble of the Declaration, are the foundations of American unity—ideals which are utterly and consciously opposed to the doctrines of totalitarian nationalism just then at the height of its power.

These principles must be defended by all members of the American *bloc* collectively, the Declaration states, and it goes on to discuss considerations of collective action. Three points seem to be of particular importance: one, that all American states are equally interested in the defence of every individual state, if its peace, security and integrity be threatened by a non-American power; second, 'aggression' need not be an armed attack from outside, but might consist of subversive propaganda or similar methods of hostile action; third, in the event of aggression, or the threat of aggression, all members of the Conference pledge themselves to participate in consultations, following a routine elaborated in detail, with a view to evolving adequate means of defence.

After Versailles, Locarno, the Kellogg Pact, and Stresa, none of us need be warned against overrating the value of well-intended declarations. We are rather inclined to shrug our

shoulders and to doubt the assurances, and most especially the solemn assurances of 'those politicians.' But naive scepticism is no whit better than naive credulity. Not all international treaties are just 'scraps of paper.' Not all solemn declarations are but empty words. It is not sufficient simply to believe or to doubt. In order to understand the character of a political instrument, it is necessary to study it in the light of its history. To grasp the significance of the Declaration of Lima, one must view it against the background of that political doctrine which during the last hundred years was as dominant in American politics as the doctrine of the Balance of Power in the affairs of modern Europe.

When, after the fall of Napoleon I, the Powers of the Holy Alliance tried to establish their reactionary ideas even outside their own countries, they did not confine themselves to the Continent of Europe. They threatened to intervene in American affairs on the side of Spain who was then trying to regain her hold over her former colonies, now become independent republics. In this situation, James Monroe, President of the United States, formulated his famous Message to Congress of December 2nd, 1823. In this he declared that the countries of the American continent would be closed against colonization for all time ; that the United States would never participate in European wars ; that the United States, in their own interest, would not suffer the Allied European powers to extend their political system to any part of America, or to vitiate the independence of the South American republics. The principle underlying this declaration became known as the 'Monroe Doctrine.'

We must keep in mind that the Monroe Doctrine is not a rule of International Law ; nor does it rest on an agreement with the states for the safety of which it was originally conceived. It is a unilateral declaration of policy on the part of the United States. As late as 1923, Secretary of State Hughes declared that the United States reserved for themselves the right of defining, interpreting and executing the policy contained in the Doctrine.

Owing to its unilateral character more than anything else, the doctrine was subject to considerable alterations as regards its significance in international politics. We can discern three main phases in its development.

The first phase. At the time of its publication, President Monroe's message is greeted with enthusiasm by the South

American republics. They are grateful to the United States for their willingness to play the part of 'Guardian of the Battle-field.' This attitude lasts as long as the nations of Latin America have to defend their independence against their mother countries, Spain and Portugal. The Monroe Doctrine is the symbol of Pan-American solidarity.

The second phase. The danger from Europe passes. The independence of the Latin-American states becomes firmly established ; self-confidence is growing. The United States, on their side, show some inclination to go beyond the part of 'guardianship' and to acquire a hegemony over the whole continent—an attitude which caused suspicion and bitter resentment. An utterance in 1895 by Secretary of State Olney, who proclaims a hegemony of the United States as an established fact, and a declaration in 1904 by President Theodore Roosevelt, conceived in the spirit of imperialism, remain unforgotten for a long time. Even after the first World War the attitude of the United States is rather disquieting ; they reject the pact of the League of Nations, because, amongst other reasons, it might hinder the free application of the Monroe Doctrine. The majority of the Latin-American States, on the other hand, join the League of Nations and some of them, as did Argentine for instance, expressly repudiate the Monroe Doctrine as being contrary to International Law.

The third phase. In the domestic struggles of the United States the followers of Imperialism are defeated. President Wilson has already solemnly rejected the idea of expansion. Pan-American solidarity on a basis of strict equality is regaining ground. There is no reason, Secretary of State Hughes suggests, why every sister-republic should not formulate principles of a policy similar to the Monroe Doctrine. But the now deep-rooted suspicion is difficult to allay. Mere words are not sufficient. On the other hand, the state of World Affairs becomes such that, more than ever, Pan-American co-operation is desirable. The success of totalitarianism causes a situation which, in many ways, resembles that which existed at the time when the Monroe Doctrine was created. Once again, powers with authoritarian governments threaten to force their ideas on the world. Once again, South and Central America are likely objects of aggression—even though for the time being the threat is less of a military than economic and propagandistic nature. It is fortunate that

during this otherwise so unhappy period the Government of the United States is headed by a statesman of real genius. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, realizing the danger, begins with great energy to reconstruct American solidarity. In 1933 he proclaims his 'Good-Neighbour Policy'; in the same year, the Pan-American Conference of Montevideo affirms that no State shall have the right to interfere with the internal or external affairs of another State. Arrangements regarding the relations existing between the United States on one side and Cuba, Panama, and Haiti on the other give factual emphasis to the theoretical rejection of any policy of interference. North-American Imperialism begins to lose its terror. Now is the time to win the whole of America for the idea of a co-operative system in the spirit of the Monroe Doctrine as originally conceived. At the Conference of Buenos Aires of 1936 it is already affirmed on principle that all America is interested in the integrity of every single American country. At the Conference of Lima the principle is defined in more concrete terms, and the actual danger is specified. The 'Declaration of Lima' affects the 'Continentalisation of the Monroe Doctrine.' According to the American politician Fenwick, the unilateral statement of the United States that it is necessary to defend the Western Hemisphere against attacks from outside, has now become a declaration of the Hemisphere itself.

The 'Declaration of Lima' is no military pact. Its signatories are not obliged to take firmly stipulated steps in the case of certain contingencies. Not in all the States of America are political conditions such as the Declaration seems to pre-suppose. The decisions taken are by no means so concrete as one could wish them to be. The Declaration, in short, is a compromise of sometimes conflicting interests, a compromise arrived at after long discussions and numerous drafts and counter-drafts. But while in this way the Declaration is of less directly practical value, it expresses all the more the will of the whole of America.

It is clear that during the discussions the initiative rested in the hands of the United States. But Secretary of State Cordell Hull (who, incidentally, had already presided at Montevideo) avoided any attempt to play a 'dictatorial' role. The United States, supported by Brazil amongst other countries, made proposals which went much further than the text of the Declaration. It would have been possible to find a majority for these proposals,

but such an action would have created a discontented minority thus endangering further developments. It is due to Secretary Hull's broadminded and brilliant diplomacy that complete harmony was preserved. His wise policy was gloriously vindicated by the events after the outbreak of this war.

It is important to point out that the principle of American solidarity is not, according to those who framed the Declaration of Lima, of a purely defensive character. During the discussions it was several times clearly stated that the system of collective security, which was aimed at by the American Nations, could at a later stage be made the basis of a universal peace. In his final address to the Lima Conference, Cordell Hull emphasized that the countries of America could not be said to attempt a segregation from the rest of the world. On the contrary, the political principles which they had adopted were essential and broad enough to be applied to the whole world.

Side by side with the collective systems of the League of Nations, and the system of Pan-American solidarity, there continued to exist and to develop the unique structure of the British Empire. The League of Nations was based on a legal instrument. The basis of American solidarity was territorial propinquity. The cohesion of the British Empire relied on racial affinity, historical tradition, and the common allegiance to the Crown.

The unique structure of the Empire ! Or perhaps it would be better to say, of the British Commonwealth of nations : for when we speak of the British Empire's political aspects, we have in mind primarily the great Dominions of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, and their relations to the Mother Country.

The modern phases of Empire development began with the reign of Queen Victoria. The North American colonies, which now form the United States of America, had seceded. The subsequent decades of resigned passivity were followed by a period of vigorous colonizing activity. The economic considerations which had played part in the secession of the North American colonies were almost trivial ; it was the insistence on the integrity of British sovereignty over her colonies which caused the destruction of that first British Empire. The Crown was guided by abstract legal reasoning ; a thing which did not often happen in English history and which led to disastrous results when it did happen. But the lesson was learned.

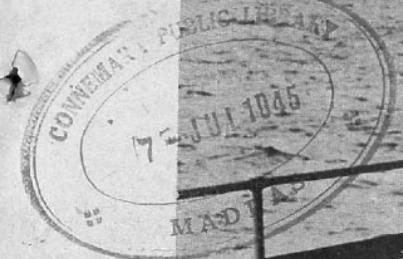
The successful development of the second empire is due to the fact that from the beginning the individual settlements were allowed, and even encouraged, to create their own governments which, controlled by representative bodies on the pattern of the British House of Commons, managed all internal affairs independently.

The institution of responsible governments in the main population settlements was an adequate expression of the peculiar qualities which British colonial enterprise had shown from the very first. While empires, as a rule, are founded on the conquest of large territories inhabited by a native population which remains the labouring part of the community under the rule of the conquerors, the first colonists on the Eastern coast of North America formed their own small communities, pushing back the native population into the interior of the Continent. They became hard-working agricultural settlers, preserving to a very large extent the European way of life, and developing a proud, self-reliant spirit. Their example was followed by British settlers in Canada, Australia and New Zealand ; and by a strange coincidence of history, those territories in Canada and South Africa which were taken over from the French and Dutch respectively had been first populated by Europeans in a similar way.

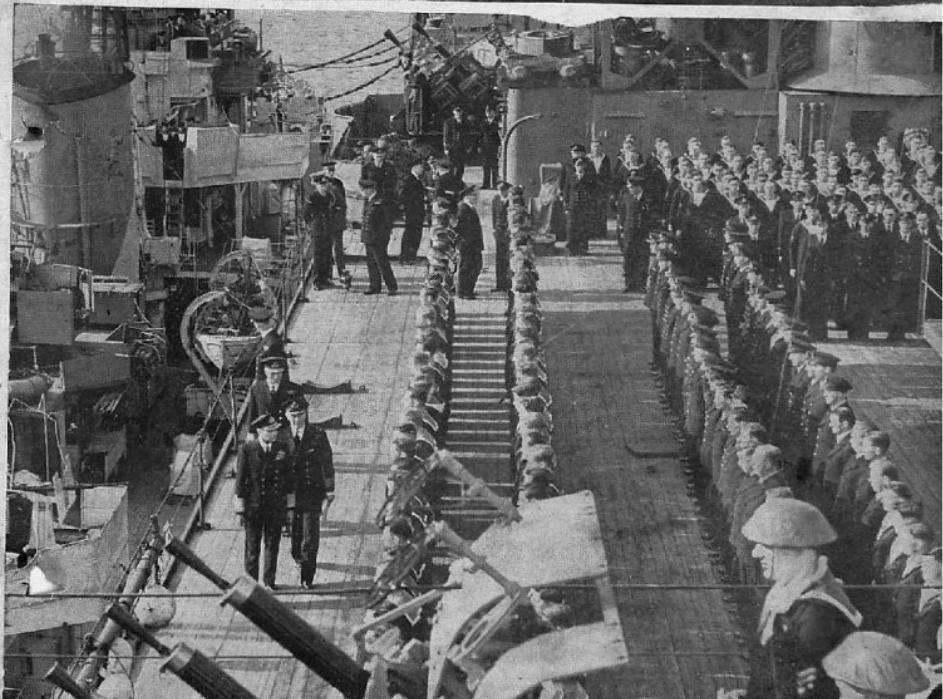
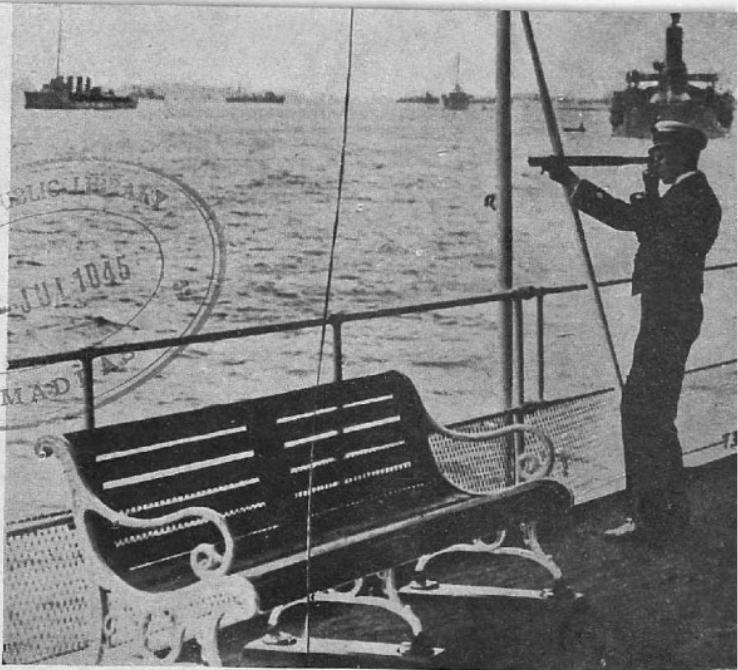
The individual settlements soon tended to form larger political units with their own federal or quasi-federal constitutions. In that respect, developments in Australia, Canada and South Africa resembled closely those which had taken place a century earlier in the North American colonies. But this time the government in London did not resent the growing power and independence which was the natural result of this process of unification. On the contrary, the constitutions which the unions or federations had given themselves were sanctioned by great Acts of Parliament, and were thus formally merged into the body of British constitutional law. Eight years after the framing of the American Federal Constitution, the British North America Act of 1867, which made Canada a federal State, was passed. The Commonwealth of Australia was formed by an Act of Parliament in 1900. The Union of South Africa, comprising four former colonies, was constituted in 1909.

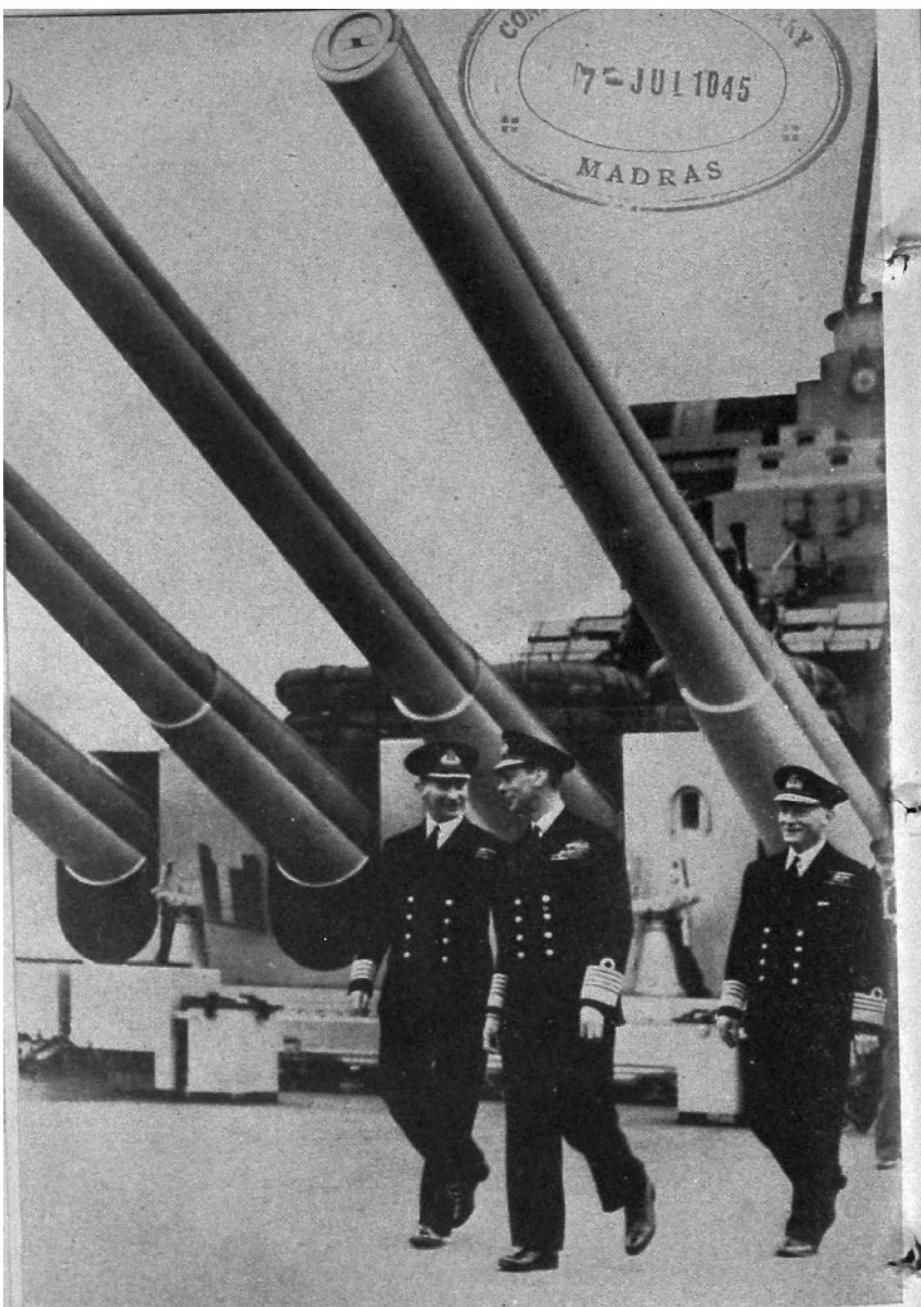
To say that the development towards unification and independence was welcomed by the political leaders of Great Britain does not mean, of course, that it took place entirely

AS A MIDSHIPMAN
DURING THE
GREAT WAR



WITH HIS HOME
FLEET DURING
THE SECOND
WORLD WAR





SYMBOLIC OF BRITAIN'S STRENGTH

without friction. Generally speaking, government departments are inclined to guard the extent of their authority jealously. Growing states in the first stages of their independent existence, on the other hand, are apt to be very sensitive of their new-gained dignity, and regard with sometimes undue suspicion everything they consider as 'interference.' British public opinion was quite satisfied with the trends discernible in Empire affairs up to a certain point. But if carried to an extreme, would not the ever-growing independence of the wealthy and well-administered communities beyond the seas inevitably result in eventual segregation? And would not severance from the Old Country be a calamity, not only for Great Britain, but also, in the long run, for the seceding states themselves? There were comparatively few people who could envisage an empire holding together without a firmly established central authority. But the process of complete decentralization had gone far already, and many doubted whether it could now be halted. The mood of large political circles in England was, as far as Empire affairs were concerned, one of resignation, a resignation made easier by the fact that the turn of the century witnessed a period of the greatest prosperity in Great Britain. Economically, the Dominions were a burden rather than an asset; in any case, they were not considered to be an economic necessity.

This mood was alarming to all those who realized the political significance of the Empire, the more so as the threat of a world conflict of unprecedented size began to loom large on the horizon of world affairs.

Imperial defence was, indeed, a grave problem. How far, the British statesmen were forced to ask themselves, would self-governing colonies go in their assistance if Great Britain were involved in a European war? Of disloyalty there was some danger only amongst part of the population of South Africa, where the Dutch Nationalists under General Hertzog were openly anti-British. But there was what would now be called isolationist feeling in Canada, too. No disloyalty, to be sure: Canada's feelings would in all circumstances be with the Old Country in the event of war. But active participation in a struggle which seemed to concern merely European affairs was as distasteful to many Canadians as it was to most citizens of the United States. A rather illogical insistence on independent action was also shown by Australia in the matter of Naval defence.

While New Zealand realized the danger of German sea rivalry, and contributed to the cost of the British Navy, submitting to the strategical leadership of the British Admiralty, Australia insisted on building her own navy according to her own ideas of naval warfare, though, of course, Australian warships would be ready to come to the help of the British Navy in the case of emergency.

Regarded from the viewpoint of Imperial defence, the even then rather loose structure of the Empire—which tended to become still looser—and the various conflicting tendencies gave so much cause for anxiety that the plan for an Imperial federation was advanced and propagated by many serious thinkers. The advantages of a well-organized Empire community of nations, with an Empire Parliament and Government, were obvious to the social theorist, but did not meet with general approval of the people in Great Britain as well as in the Dominions. With all its admitted faults, the Empire as then formed was preferred to the conception of an Empire federation, and when in 1914 the Empire, far from dissolving itself, held together in a way which even the greatest optimist would have been reluctant to predict, progress on the traditional lines of its development was assured.

The ideal of Dominion status in the sense with which we are now acquainted, propagated by General Smuts and the Canadian politician, Sir Robert Borden, found for the first time official expression during the Imperial War Conference of 1917. The Conference recommended that “any adjustment of constitutional relations . . . should be based upon full recognition of the Dominions as autonomous nations of an Imperial Commonwealth, and of India as an important portion of the same ; should recognize the right of the Dominions and India to an adequate voice in foreign policy ; and should provide effective arrangements for continuous consultation . . . and for such necessary concerted action, founded on consultation, as the several governments determine.”

This, of course, was a plain rejection of the federal idea. Instead, full autonomy of the Dominions on the one hand, consultation and co-operation between the equal partners of the British Commonwealth of Nations on the other, was demanded.

As a natural consequence of the Conference of 1917, the Dominions attended the Peace Conference in their own right ; their representatives signed the Treaty of Versailles ; each Dominion was admitted as a separate member into the League of

Nations, and some were entrusted with mandates under the League system.

Thus, in actual fact, the Dominions had obtained the status of independent States not only, as formerly, in regard to the conduct of their internal affairs and their relations with the United Kingdom, but also in regard to other States. In fact ; for legally the position remained unclarified in the years following the Great War. The direction, however, in which developments were moving was quite clear, and step by step the state of affairs visualized by the statesmen of the Imperial War Conference of 1917 became reality, notwithstanding occasional setbacks and frictions.

The Irish Free State was the first to be recognized formally by Parliament as 'a co-equal member of the Community of Nations forming the British Commonwealth of Nations.' That was in 1922. It was in conformity with the thus established equality status that the Irish Free State, in 1924, established its own legation in the capital of the United States.

In South Africa the doubts about the good intentions of British policy in regard to the independence of the Dominions revived soon after the war. The Boer population still contained elements which were hostile to Britain and inclined to republican ideas. The vagueness of the legal position aroused their distrust, and when in 1924 the pro-British Prime Minister, General Smuts, was succeeded by the fanatical Boer Nationalist, General Hertzog, clarification became more necessary than ever.

In Canada, too, disputes had arisen. The British Government had consented to the appointment of a Canadian Minister at Washington in 1920 (he was, in fact, not appointed before 1926) ; but when in 1922 Canada concluded a treaty with the United States regarding halibut fisheries without consulting the British Government, her right to do so was disputed. The problem was solved for the time being by the Imperial Conference of 1923. It was stipulated that a Dominion had the right to conclude agreements and treaties with foreign states, but that it would have to inform other members of the Commonwealth likely to be affected by the treaty or agreement, before the start of negotiations. Other disputes followed, an important one relating to the position of the Governor-General as representative of the King in regard to the dissolution of the Canadian Parliament by the Prime Minister.

Another incident which made clarification desirable was

caused by the impetuosity of Mr. Lloyd George, then British Prime Minister, in 1922. His appeal, in which he asked for the support of the Dominions for his planned intervention in the struggle between Greeks and Turks on the side of the former, was published before it was seen by the competent Dominion Ministers. It is highly improbable that interference with the right of the Dominions to make their own decisions was intended ; but the resentment caused by the comparatively trivial incident showed that the position could not much longer remain so vague without the risk of a larger Imperial crisis.

That the British Government was not intent on adopting a domineering attitude towards the Dominions in the field of International affairs was amply proved by a clause embodied in the Locarno Treaty of 1925, excepting the Dominions from any obligation under the treaty unless voluntarily accepted by the Dominions.

But if doubts existed regarding the reality and extent of Dominion status, they were allayed by the Balfour Committee of the Imperial Conference of 1926.

In this Conference a final understanding was reached. A new 'society' within the Empire had come into being, and the members of this society were defined as 'autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate to one another in any respect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations.'

The contents of the understanding reached in 1926 were brought into legal form in 1931 by the Statute of Westminster, which had been prepared by a conference of experts in 1929 and a further Imperial Conference in 1930. The Statute of Westminster, be it noted, is a statute passed by the British Parliament on the request of each Dominion Parliament : that is to say, that by passing the Statute the British Parliament still acted as the supreme legislative power for the whole of the Empire.

In the Statute of Westminster itself the Dominion Parliaments were made equals in their own sphere to the British Parliament in its sphere. Each Dominion Parliament was fully sovereign in the Dominion concerned, just as the British Parliament is sovereign in the United Kingdom. In future, the British Parliament would not be entitled to legislate for any Dominion,

not even in the realm of foreign relations. And as the Crown is the common bond between the equal members of the new Empire society, any legislation concerning the succession to the throne must have the participation of every single Dominion Parliament.

The Dominions are sovereign States. The Empire of India has been promised full Dominion status as soon as circumstances permit. But to say that the society of the British Empire consists of sovereign communities (which are later to be joined by other communities which have not yet reached the last stage of their constitutional development) does not indicate the inter-relationship between these communities, the relationship which preserves the character of a cohesive Empire. A declaration made by the Balfour Committee of the Imperial Conference of 1926, when the formula of equal status was discussed, is worth quoting at length :

"A foreigner endeavouring to understand the true character of the British Empire by the aid of this formula alone would be tempted to think that it was devised rather to make mutual interference impossible than to make mutual co-operation easy.

"Such a criticism, however, completely ignores the historic situation. The rapid evolution of the Overseas Dominions during the last fifty years has involved many complicated adjustments of old political machinery to changing conditions. The tendency towards equality of status was both right and inevitable. Geographical and other conditions made this impossible of attainment by the way of federation. The only alternative was by way of autonomy ; and along this road it has been steadily sought. Every self-governing member of the Empire is now the master of its destiny. In fact, if not always in form, it is subject to no compulsion whatever.

"But no account, however accurate, of the negative relations in which Great Britain and the Dominions stand to each other can do more than express a portion of the truth. The British Empire is not founded upon negations. It depends essentially, if not formally, on positive ideals. Free institutions are its life-blood. Free co-operation is its instrument. Peace, security, and progress are among its objects. Aspects of all these great themes have been discussed at the present Conference ; excellent results have been thereby obtained. And though every Dominion is now, and must always remain, the sole judge of the

nature and extent of its co-operation, no common cause will, in our opinion, be thereby imperilled.

"Equality of status, so far as Britain and the Dominions are concerned, is thus the root principle governing our Inter-Imperial Relations. But the principles of equality and similarity, appropriate to *status*, do not universally extend to *function*. Here we require something more than immutable dogmas. For example to deal with questions of diplomacy and questions of defence we require also flexible machinery—machinery which can, from time to time, be adapted to the changing circumstances of the world."

The Statute of Westminster was framed in the spirit of this declaration ; and if the essence of law is coercion, the Statute of Westminster is anything but satisfactory as a constitutional instrument. Many vital questions present themselves, and the legal experts can give no definite answer. Can the Statute of Westminster, which has been given by Parliament, also be repealed by Parliament ? Are the Dominions entitled to adopt republican systems of government ? Have they the right of secession ? What will happen if any of the Dominion Parliaments fail to agree with the British Parliament about legislation regarding the succession to the throne ? These and many other problems remain unsettled, and purposely so. The law may be doubtful, but in fact there is hardly a difference of opinion that the Dominions can act as they see fit in any situation. "No common cause will, in our opinion, be thereby imperilled." The sanguine confidence of the Empire statesmen of 1926 has been vindicated in most cases, though in some the results were not so favourable. Does not in the present war the attitude of the Irish Free State greatly assist the designs of the common foe ? And yet, I do not doubt that fundamentally in the construction of the Statute of Westminster the wisest, the only possible, course was taken.

But what is the flexible machinery which is to deal with such important questions as those of diplomacy and defence ?

We have already seen the important part played by Imperial Conferences which have met at intervals of about four years since they were instituted in 1887. They are presided over by the British Prime Minister ; the Prime Ministers and other Ministers of the governments of Britain and the Dominions attend. The discussions of an Imperial Conference have no legally binding effect, but understandings or conventions are often reached on which future action, and sometimes legislation, is based.

On the economic side, the Imperial Conference is complemented by the Economic Conference which assembles, however, less frequently and regularly. The Economic Conference at Ottawa of 1932 was of especial importance.

The question of Imperial preference had for a long time been one of the most difficult issues existing between Great Britain and the Dominions. In the last century, Britain's policy of free trade suited the purpose of Empire economics admirably well. It assured an open market in the Old World for the countries which were then at the beginning of their development into self-governing dominions, and were dependent on the sale of their surplus of primary products. At the same time, they were consumers for British manufactured goods. British industrial supremacy was then unchallenged; Britain could sell more cheaply than any European competitor, furthering the quick and comparatively cheap production of primary goods in the Empire countries, which fact, in turn, enabled her to keep her own industrial costs on a low level.

Things changed during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Many of the European countries adopted a policy of agricultural protectionism at the very time when the development of transport facilities made of the Dominions possible world suppliers of raw materials and foodstuffs. The Dominions, on their part, had begun to develop their own industries and proceeded to protect them by tariffs. Canada adopted its first protective tariff in 1879; New Zealand in 1895; in Australia the tariffs existing in the different colonies were brought into a unified protective system by the Commonwealth; in South Africa a similar development took place.

Britain was faced with a difficult situation. As long as her industries were far ahead of all competitors, and her control over Empire production and trade was unchallenged, free trade was economically the only reasonable policy (though politically, the unavoidable decline of British agriculture was a rather unpleasant consequence). But the vigorous economic nationalism to be observed in so many countries created not only an increasing number of industrial competitors to be reckoned with, but also supported political ambitions which were mainly or partly directed against Britain. Germany, in particular, methodically exploited success in the economic field for the furtherance of a policy of expansion.

Confronted with a dilemma of which there was no entirely satisfactory solution, Britain, under Liberal leadership, resolved to adhere to free-trade principles. The Dominions, meanwhile, began to develop a system of Imperial preference. Canada led the movement. She introduced a 'reciprocal tariff', which was lower than the general tariff, and applied to goods from the United Kingdom, New South Wales, India and, before Britain's renunciation of her commercial treaties with Germany and Belgium in 1898, from all countries which had most-favoured-nation agreements with Britain.

By 1908, when Australia granted preference to United Kingdom goods, it can be said that a system of Imperial preference was established in the chief member countries of the Empire—except the United Kingdom itself. More than that : while as a rule reciprocity was made a condition of preferential treatment, no such condition was imposed on the United Kingdom.

Although it has rightly been pointed out that even at that stage Britain's free-trade policy held substantial advantages for the countries of the Empire to offset partly the disadvantages, Empire statesmen began to complain seriously of the one-sidedness of Imperial preference.

The trend of events was only temporarily interrupted by the outbreak of the Great War. The difficulty of problems increased considerably when the first post-War boom was over. Nationalism in almost all these countries except Great Britain grew intense. National industries were directly or indirectly subsidised by the State everywhere, political and economic 'power policies' became inextricably involved. When prices for agricultural products slumped in the late twenties, British farmers were unable to compete in the world market. The pressure exerted by the Dominions to bring about the United Kingdom's active participation in a system of Imperial preference was supported by a powerful section of British public opinion. Those who maintained, with very good arguments indeed, that the economic illness of the time was a universal symptom and would have to be cured by universal means, lost ground when all hopes for international understanding proved illusory.

These were the tendencies which caused a reversal, though not a complete one, of Britain's traditional policy, as manifest in the Import Duties Act and the Ottawa Agreements.

The Ottawa Conference, by any standard, was no great success. It could not be. The questions raised were exceedingly complex; the interests of the different members conflicting ; no common basis of an economic or political theory existed.

This is not the place to go into details of the agreements reached at the Conference. It is sufficient to say that it erected new trade barriers against the world outside the Empire, without finding a firmly grounded platform on which planned Empire economy could be constructed. The Ottawa clauses were subsequently interpreted variously by different countries.

There is every reason to assume that the upheaval of the present war will in any case make necessary a total revision of all existing economic agreements ; but it is to be hoped that the Ottawa Conference will be regarded as at least a precedent for economic planning within the society of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

This brings us back to the political consideration of Empire affairs, where the British Crown plays so decisive a part. We have seen that the Dominions have become independent and sovereign states the equals of the United Kingdom. But there remains the fact, resented by nobody, that Britain is still the only world power amongst the Empire nations, and retains her quality as the centre of gravity of the Empire. Equality in status, as it has been expressed, does not imply equality of stature. When the Locarno Treaty was discussed at the Imperial Conference of 1926, it was stated that ' in the sphere of foreign affairs, as in the sphere of defence, the major share of responsibility rests now, and must for some time continue to rest, with H.M. Government in Great Britain.'

The Dominions, far from grudging the Mother Country her position as *prima inter pares*, look to her for some degree of political, economic and cultural leadership. Indeed, during the years before the war not a little disappointment with Britain was felt in the Dominions and Colonies for her lack of initiative. It is true that sometimes the reasons for certain actions or omissions on the part of British statesmen were misunderstood in the Empire. A certain lack of industrial and commercial enterprise, in addition to the disastrous failures of Foreign Policy, were bad enough in themselves ; but worse even was the reluctance to explain and justify clearly and unambiguously the

aims and motives of the British Government. Affection for the Old Country and loyalty to the Throne remained firm, and when Britain, led by the towering personality of Winston Churchill, proved to the world that she had not lost her strength, the old confidence in Britain's leadership returned. If any proof were needed, General Smuts' overwhelming victory at the polls in August, 1943, would furnish it convincingly.

Mr. Anthony Eden, the Foreign Minister of Great Britain, said in a broadcast message to New Zealand on February 6th, 1940:

"A strong, independent, self-governing Dominion has grown to full manhood. A free Dominion. Yet one bound in allegiance to the Throne by ties 'light as air, but strong as link of iron.'"

This phrase, I think, very happily expresses the significance of the Monarchy. That the Crown is one of the essential links which bind the parts of the Empire together cannot be doubted; whether it is legally so, is still a matter of controversy. The Statute of Westminster takes the continued existence of the Monarchy for granted; it is said in the preamble that "Whereas it is meet and proper to set out by way of preamble to this Act, that, inasmuch as the Crown is the symbol of the free association of the members of the British Commonwealth of Nations, and as they are united by a common allegiance to the Crown, it would be in accord with the established constitutional position of all members of the Commonwealth in relation to one another that any alteration in the law touching the Succession to the Throne or the Royal Style and Titles shall hereafter require the assent as well of the Parliaments of all the Dominions as of the Parliament of the United Kingdom."

This passage has been interpreted in different ways. Some maintain that it sets a limit to the autonomy of the Dominions, as it does not allow them to discontinue in their allegiance to the King; others argue that it merely pledges the Dominions to do their best in avoiding confusion where the Succession is concerned. And what of the unity of the Crown? The King is constitutionally bound to accept the advice of his ministers: how will he act if the advice given in one State of the Commonwealth is flatly contradictory to that given in another? The dilemma is so obvious that it must be mentioned, although I do not care to essay an answer. But this passage from Mr. Ernest

Baker's book *Ideas and Ideals of the Empire*, seems worth quoting : " There is, however, a danger in emphasizing the unity of the Crown, and in holding that the unity of the Commonwealth depends upon that unity. We must put our faith in reality (the reality of a will to co-operation), and not in legal doctrine—especially when that doctrine is possibly dubious, and certainly challenged. There is a unity of the Crown ; but there is also a divisibility, or at any rate a *de facto* division, of the Crown. There is a sense in which there are six Crowns (one for Great Britain, and one for each of the five Dominions) as well as the one Imperial Crown—if indeed there be a single Imperial Crown."

The extreme flexibility of monarchical government thus established in the Empire is an experiment to which nothing even remotely similar can be found in history. It corresponds perfectly with the conception of an Empire whose very essence is its perpetual adaptation to changing circumstances. The tasks that are awaiting the Empire, and so in direct consequence the British Crown, are enormous. Not only remain numerous problems within the Empire to be solved ; constructive relationships will have to be found with the Great Powers, federations and co-operative societies of nations which will emerge from the present conflict. These tasks will have to be tackled in an active, vigorous spirit. The nature of the British Commonwealth, this unique society of autonomous nations, spread over the two hemispheres, does not permit of ' isolationist ' thinking. To the Empire, even more obviously than to regional unions or supernational structures as the Soviet Union or the Pan-American *bloc*, the birth of an international society is essential. There are those who rather contemptuously refuse to consider anything but politico-legal or economic machinery. They call it realism. But even Bismarck, surely a ' realist ' if ever there was one, taught that *imponderabilia* were the most potent factors in history. The evolution of the British Empire is a convincing example. The British Crown, very far from being an anachronistic relic of the past, is destined, so I firmly believe, to be a spiritual force that will benefit not only the future well-being of the Commonwealth, but also the growth of that society of mankind on which we must set our hopes.

KING GEORGE VI AND HIS PEOPLE

THE KING'S PEOPLE

AGREAT KING, AND A GREAT EMPIRE. And let me add what an Englishman himself would be very reluctant to say—a great people!

Why is it so very difficult for a stranger to understand the people of Britain? Many books have been written, many theories have been advanced, to explain the British character which is so important a factor in the world and which appears to be so full of contradictions and mysteries.

The foreigner who enters the country for the first time is struck by the apparent simplicity of the people and their way of life. These well-behaved business men in dark city suits and with the inevitable umbrella ; these quiet, friendly, pipe-smoking workers ; these suburban householders who are so content in their little gardens when the day's business is over ; are they the people who have built an Empire which is the admiration and the envy of the world ? They are so unassuming, so easily entertained, so set in their habits. They have not the appearance of conquerors.

I have often experienced that a friend, after having spent a few weeks in this country, was quite confident that he had grasped the essentials of the English character ; but those who have spent years in the midst of English people confess that they are only *beginning* to understand.

The Englishman does not like to speak of himself, which makes it still more difficult for the foreigner. He does not feel an urge for self-expression. He has not the temperament of the Latin races who want to share their joys and sorrows with the outside world. Unlike the Russian, he is not fond of probing into the depth of his own soul, and still less of talking about it to strangers. The British, with their proud and happy history, have not the national inferiority complex of the German people who, all too conscious of their failures in history, are inclined to give uncalled-for explanations and excuses.

No ! the English are not demonstrative, neither as individuals nor as a nation. They have never seen the necessity to spread propaganda on behalf of themselves and their achievements, though sometimes they issue very excellent propaganda for the causes they may be fighting for. But if they refuse to reveal themselves easily to the inquisitive stranger, let us see what is said about them by others.

'The British is the most democratic of all nations. England is the last fortress of aristocratic ideals. The English are a nation of shopkeepers. The English are a nation of born rulers. They are almost intolerably matter-of-fact. They are sentimental. English journalism is the most highly developed in the world. Cheap journalism in England is sillier and more vulgar than anywhere else. The English are primitive. The English are decadent. They have a sober and puritanical mind. They have a grand sense of humour.' Contradiction after contradiction ; and in each statement a grain of truth is contained. No generalization seems to fit. Whenever one passes a judgment, the opposite seems to be quite as true. Have the British an insular outlook ? But nowhere else will you find so many widely-travelled and broadminded people ! Do they dislike strangers ? And yet, giving asylum to the persecuted was a cherished tradition ! How can we explain the contradictions ? How, most important of all, can we explain that in spite of all contradictions there is undeniably a British national character—a character more rigid, perhaps, than that of any other great nation ?

Much has been made of the fact that the inhabitants of the British Isles were predestined by their geographical position to become a seafaring and trading people. To some extent that is certainly true. The British have become a nation whose exploits on all the oceans of the globe seem to be the most remarkable of their achievements. But for centuries of Britain's early history she had not been a seafaring nation. England, as well as Scotland, Wales and Ireland, were agricultural countries, and the rustic tradition is still alive after the many centuries during which maritime commerce and industrial production became predominant. The common people in Shakespeare's plays are truly rustic ; their humour is the robust humour of peasants, intimately connected with the soil which they cultivate. To those who know only a little of Britain, the characters of Shakespeare and other Elizabethan writers appear strangely un-English ; but even to-day one can find their type, not only tilling the fields, but also drinking their pint o' bitter in a Lambeth pub, or enjoying themselves with enormous gusto at the annual fair on Hampstead Heath.

Nor would it be true to say that in the first four or five centuries of English history the 'insularity' of mind which is now so

noticeable was already formed as a natural consequence of the geographical features. The mental barrier between Britain and the Continent which now undoubtedly exists was not to be found in those times. England was then a European country in the fullest sense of the term. No social, no cultural, no religious movement existed on the Continent which did not have its counterpart in the British Isles. Chivalry, scholasticism, the crusading movement, Gothic art and architecture : all these belonged to English life as they belong to the life of all medieval Europe. This tradition, too, lingers. It is to be found in the quiet atmosphere of the Cathedral towns ; in the Inns of Court, which form strange islands in the buzzing traffic of London's City ; in the cloister-like colleges of the ancient universities. You will find it, too, in the attitude of the Englishman towards his womenfolk. Yes, his ideal of the English lady, to which there is no equivalent in any other country ; this tender, gracious being, put on a pedestal, to be reverenced, a little unearthly, fragrant, easily offended by a rude word uttered in her presence. She has been painted by the greatest English painters, by Gainsborough and Romney, by Burne-Jones and Rosetti. Her praise has been sung in the verses of Browning, Shelley and Tennyson. Is she not, in the guise of her century, the damsel honoured and beloved in the Age of Chivalry ? And let no one make the error of thinking that the ideal has been replaced by that of the 'modern woman.' True, the British woman of to-day takes her place beside the man, in work and war. Superficially, these sturdy young women who work the plough in their green Land Girls' uniform or man the guns of anti-aircraft batteries bear little resemblance to the dainty ladies of former times; but in a subtle way the old ideal is preserved in the mentality of British men, young and old (though many would be embarrassed to admit the fact).

In the English attitude towards sport, there is much of the original chivalrous spirit, and in many ways the ideals of sport have been applied to the sphere of war—not infrequently to the detriment of the nation. To commit no hostile acts before war is declared ; to respect the agreed rules of warfare and to trust the adversary to respect them too; never to 'kick a man when he is down' ; to forget hatred almost as soon as hostilities have ceased ; how different is all this from the idea of 'Total Warfare' !

Even in their love for the Monarchy I seem to detect in the

British a trace of the spirit of the Middle Ages. In most countries, kingship is identified with that form of monarch, which developed in the times of nationalism, when absolute rulership was the means to accomplish national unity. In Britain, however, the idea of the King as the spiritual head of the nation, whatever be his political functions, is still alive.

This is one of the foremost traits of the British character : with them, things are not easily forgotten ; memories are sacred, and age is in itself venerable. It is a truly British characteristic to preserve through centuries that which has proved its worth ; to adapt old institutions to changing circumstances ; to form a new world out of the old traditions with careful deliberation.

There is nothing in England's past that does not, in some form or other, live in the present. You may find the scholastic philosopher of old poring over his volumes in some lonely vicarage. You can meet the rough adventurer of Tudor times in any street of the City. Let an angry oath escape your lips, and you may find that the quiet gentleman sitting next to you in the Underground is really one of Cromwell's militant ' saints.'

The Englishman's veneration for the past is perhaps most evident in the English system of law, where it often conflicts with considerations of expediency. The very language of legal documents is so ancient and full of otherwise obsolete expressions that a layman is unable to transact even the simplest business without the help of a learned lawyer. Cases which may have been decided hundreds of years ago can still influence decisions even to-day. Many legal doctrines have slowly developed through the centuries by judgment after judgment, becoming curiously and unnecessarily involved in the process. In continental countries, if a not too complicated legal problem arises, the interested party can refer to the text of the appropriate code of law and perhaps one or two commentaries ; he will then be able to form an opinion of his possible success in a law-suit. In England, he will not only have to consult a solicitor but, as like as not, the opinion of learned counsel must be obtained. This makes 'going to law' a very expensive business. And yet, the British people prefer, on the whole, a case-law with its many disadvantages, but with the authority of age-old tradition, to the 'upstart' efficiency of modern statute law.

The wigs and robes of judges and barristers are but an outward sign of the tradition which lives in the administration of justice in

our times. That the tradition exists, that the fundamental rules by which criminal trials as well as proceedings of civil law are ruled have been evolved by centuries of experience in close contact with the general history of the country, is of the greatest importance. The British people feel that the justice administered in their courts is truly *their* justice. Statutes are often made to meet the demand of the moment, without taking root in the life of the nation. They cannot always be avoided, but they will never carry the moral authority which the Common Law of England happily possesses. But the true test, which should be applied to the state of the law in any country, is not how does it conform with the abstract demands of legal theory, but rather how far does it command the respect and the confidence of the people.

The English, as a rule, are proud of their law, but the reasons they give are sometimes, I think, erroneous. I have often found that people think certain rules, which are peculiar to every civilized system of law, are typically English: that a person is considered innocent until he is found guilty by his judges (it is a principle acknowledged by the law of every civilized country which I know) has often been pointed out to me as a typical example of English justice. Generally speaking, it is not the contents of the law so much as the awe in which the law is held by the British citizen, which is remarkable.

There have, perhaps, never been better laws anywhere than in the republics of Germany and Austria. They had been drawn up by the finest legal brains in the respective countries. The legal systems of many foreign nations, as well as those of the old Germany and Austria-Hungary, had been carefully analysed. The new laws had been conceived in a spirit of democracy and progress. But all that was of little avail, because the peoples of Germany and Austria did not consider their Constitutions as something which was an integral part of national culture; they were only regarded as instruments of a political system which had been imposed upon them by the victors of the Great War. Thus, when the Nazis attacked the law of the land just as violently as their political enemies, they found little resistance. The whole elaborate system with hardly any technical fault was practically swept away in a few weeks of revolution.

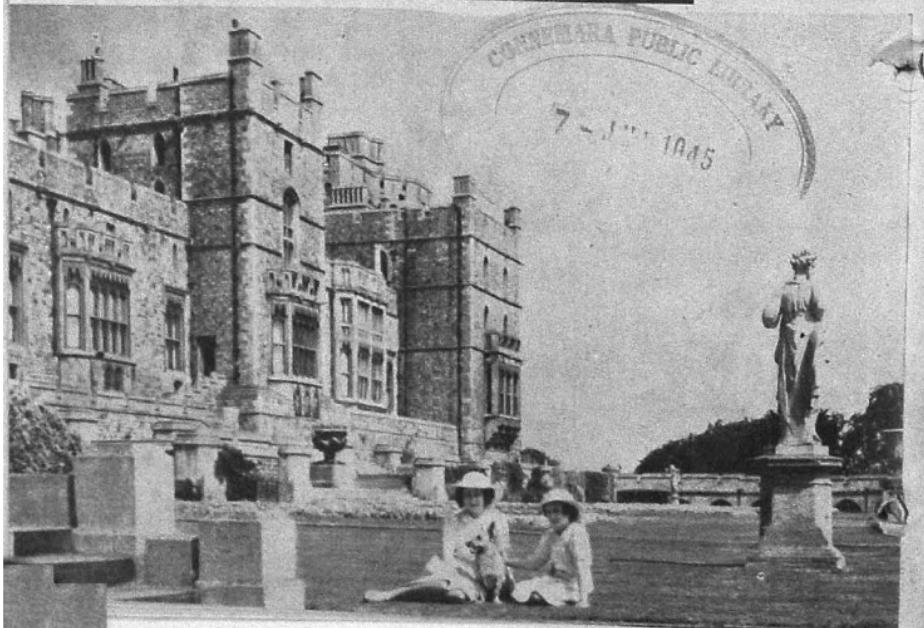
Compare with this the attitude of the British citizen, when



THE 'HOME' ATMOSPHERE, SO TYPICALLY BRITISH



THE SECRET OF
THEIR GREAT
POPULARITY;
TWO NATURAL,
UNASSUMING
GIRLS



necessities of war make it imperative that fundamental legal traditions be temporarily suspended. He may agree that in times of great danger persons suspected of disloyalty must be detained without trial by judge or jury ; but he detests the necessity and his chosen representatives in the House of Commons keep a watchful eye on the administration to ensure that the suspension of the ancient *habeas corpus* rule is not unduly exploited. It is often said that the English are a law-abiding people. That is hardly true in the sense that there are fewer evil-doers in Britain than in other countries ; but it is true in the sense that in no other country the law (which, be it remembered, is administered in the name of the King) is as firmly rooted in the hearts and minds of the people.

But if it is true to say that the British people, in their love for the past, are often slow to make changes in their way of doing things (sometimes even if it is imperative to make those changes) it is equally true that they are often almost ruthless in the abolition of something they consider obsolete. That is one of the curious contradictions in the national character which is often overlooked. Let us not forget that this very conservative nation, so inclined to stick to its loyalties, was the first of modern nations to make an industrial revolution. It was the British who first understood the enormous possibilities of the machine and, in the course of a few decades, changed their country from a predominantly agricultural one into the very home of industrial enterprise. I have known an Englishman, whose daily routine had followed the same pattern for very many years, suddenly decide, for reasons which seemed wholly inadequate to me, that he wanted to make his home in Australia, where a relative of his owned a sheep-farm. He acted on his decision within a few days, and nobody except myself seemed particularly surprised. Or again, how naturally and cheerfully were the complete changes demanded in everybody's life by the exigencies of war accepted throughout the country. The Germans had been trained and mentally prepared for this during many years before the outbreak of war ; yet neutral observers confirm that it is very difficult for the German Government to make the home front accept violent changes. Here the mobilization of the civil population went quite smoothly. Even the most conservative circles did not hesitate to give up their habitual occupations, their time, their very homes, just as the working people willingly surrendered

their free choice of employment. This, of course, is no more than appropriate while soldiers, sailors and airmen offer their lives in the defence of their country. I had never doubted that the majority of the British people would do their obvious duty ; but frankly, the splendid ease with which they are able to take the strain did surprise me. That the Royal Family sets an example in the cheerful performance of wartime duties is not astonishing to anyone who knows the history of the House of Windsor. But more of that in a later chapter.

The unique ability to make occasional abrupt changes, so strangely in contrast with the usual conservatism, is sometimes explained by another outstanding trait of the British character : love of liberty.

There is a fundamental difference between the traditional British conception of liberty and that which has been evolved by the philosophers of other countries, in particular of Germany and countries under German influence. There, liberty means freedom of action ; the possibility of developing one's powers to the utmost extent ; liberty to enforce one's will and ideals on others. It is clear that liberty in that sense presupposes the existence of servitude as a complement. That, the most influential German philosophers have argued, is unavoidable. They argue that since the destinies of human beings are interdependent, and since their interests and aims are naturally conflicting, no one can develop his own personality fully—and that means, he cannot be free—if the freedom of some of his fellow men is not wholly or partially suppressed. To demand liberty for all, they maintain, is merely hypocritical ; one can only aim at liberty for the best.

If their fundamental definition of liberty as complete freedom of action is accepted, it cannot be denied that their reasoning is quite logical. This idea of liberty has deeply influenced their theory of State. According to the German philosophers who, in the first half of the last century, reigned almost supreme in the field of social theory, the liberty of the individual could at best only be assured by the absolute authority of the State. The doctrine that complete subservience to the State means the highest fulfilment of the ideal of liberty, sounds like paradoxical nonsense in the ears of the average Anglo-Saxon, but it should be carefully considered. Hegel, Fichte and their followers were neither fools nor, as many seem to assume, the willing tools of Prussian

militarism. Their philosophy has been perverted and exploited by the miserable epigones who at the moment—though certainly not for very much longer—control the destinies of the Continent. Absolute authority of the State and the ideal of liberty—liberty in the sense which I have tried to explain—are not incompatible, if a complementary doctrine is accepted : namely, that the State and its laws and institutions are but the outward form of the will and soul of a nation, or a nation's most vital forces.

To men like Fichte who were sincere Christians as well as sincere patriots, the liberty of a nation, her right to develop the national character to the highest degree of fulfilment, has nothing to do with territorial expansion and brutal militarism. In that respect, quite mistaken ideas are entertained in this country. If it is true that German idealistic philosophy has been used to justify actions which would have shocked its founders beyond measure, it is equally true that it once inspired the most respectable and hopeful forces in the life of the German nation.

It cannot be sufficiently emphasized that the term 'democracy' conveys even to the sincere minority of German democrats, and the democrats of many other European countries as well, something quite different from the conception of democracy in this country. This is not the place to give a thorough explanation of democracy and individual liberty as they are conceived in large parts of the Continent, but the danger of misunderstandings must be pointed out. It is generally admitted that after the necessary coercion of the German people into decent behaviour a period of re-education must begin if Germany is ever to become a valuable member of the human society. But the success of re-education will depend to a large extent on *the clarity of terminology*. Apparently similar terms—democracy, liberty, justice, government—may cover a variety of meaning, and therefore be misleading.

But to return to the British conception of liberty. To the British—and the same applies to the Americans—liberty means, in the first place, freedom from foreign interference. The Englishman is not naturally expansive or overfond of self-expression. He wants to be 'left alone,' to be able to lead his life as much as possible undisturbed within the confines which he willingly accepts. He hates the application of force, even the force of the law, unless it cannot be avoided. The end of law, as John Locke, one of the most typical of English philosophers, taught, is not to abolish or restrain, but to preserve or enlarge freedom. It is not the duty of

the State, or of any other social institution, to further the self-development of individual person or groups of persons (which would necessarily have to be done at the cost of the freedom of others), but rather to safeguard the individual liberties which already exist.

The Englishman, in fact, is inclined to believe that everyone naturally occupies a station in life which is his due, and which has to be defended against infringement by others. It is for this reason that equality before the law is part of his creed ; it means that all individuals have an equal right to have their own particular sphere of life protected. Equality before the law is the very essence of British democracy.

At the same time, he does not believe in equality of social standing or social function. Describing the new society of the British Empire, I mentioned that equality of 'status' did not imply equality of 'stature' ; as regards the latter, the United Kingdom remains in a position of leadership, none of the Dominions resenting the fact in the least. This attitude is deeply grounded in the philosophy of the British people. The doctrine of the French and American Revolutions that 'all men are created equal' is not generally accepted in this country, or only in the sense of legal equality. The Englishman's deep understanding of the laws of nature makes him suspect this well-sounding theory : he knows that there is no equality in nature. He does not understand the hatred of titles and social privileges. To him there is nothing incongruous in the fact that a nation which considers herself a champion of democracy is also the home of the proudest and most exclusive aristocracy of the world, and he does not consider that the respect which he willingly pays to the dignity of royalty mars in the slightest degree his tradition as part of a nation of free men and women.

Britain always has been the despair of revolutionaries. In spite of the fact that the Labour Movement in this country is the strongest, and perhaps the most successful, in the world, revolutionary socialism and all its implications failed to gain a foothold. The absence of social hatred and envy is certainly one of the reasons. The British worker is, of course, fully aware of the fact that legal equality is an illusion as long as economic pressure prevents the full employment of the liberties which are theoretically granted to him. Against any pressure of this kind he is prepared to fight, and in his Trade Union movement and the

Labour Party he has found powerful weapons. But neither the complete abolition of all class distinctions nor a dictatorship of his own class hold any allurements for him. He is perfectly content if he is given 'his chance.'

I am, of course, not implying that there exists no friction, or that no social, apart from economic, problems have to be solved. Nobody claims that everything in Britain's social order is working with perfect smoothness. But no one here would dream of attempting to settle the outstanding problems by the kind of class-warfare which was so fatal a feature in continental Europe. The spirit in which they will be tackled is perhaps best shown in the history of the Duke of York's Camp.

In this camp public schoolboys and youths drawn from the working class were brought together. The idea was born in 1921, when a football match between a party of young Welsh miners and factory hands on one side, and Westminster School on the other, was arranged under the auspices of the Industrial Welfare Society, of which the King, then Duke of York, was President. The friendly atmosphere created by the game suggested the idea of a permanent camp in which boys from public schools and from working-class homes could mingle freely. The suggestion was eagerly taken up by the King who has never lost interest in the very successful experiment of the camp, which he visited regularly.

The Camp was naturally only a tiny contribution towards the attempted solution of social problems, but it was not without significance. Not only had the Crown shown profound interest in the well-being of the youth of the 'lower' classes : it had been done—and this is most important—not in a spirit of charity from 'high above,' but in way which was an authoritative repudiation of all social snobbery.

This attitude which strikes a happy balance between class-animosity on the one side and subservience on the other, makes it possible to maintain the unity of the nation symbolized by the Crown. If Britain adopted the doctrine that the different classes of society were inevitably antagonistic, the semblance of unity could only be preserved by means of a dictatorial regime. It has been stated that the Monarchy is the main cause of Britain's national unity which has withstood the disruptive tendencies of the century; that, I think, is exaggerated. But the survival of the monarchy is

certainly one of the many reasons, and its unchallenged popularity is the surest sign that unity really exists.

Equality, then, is not one of the aims of British democracy ; nor, let me add, is maximum efficiency. In fact, the attempt to obtain the highest possible degree of national efficiency cannot be reconciled with the ideals of British liberty. Except in times of great emergency, measures cannot be defended on the ground of their intrinsic efficiency if they threaten to infringe individual rights. We have seen that the same principle was applied by the Dominions when the politico-legal machinery of the Empire was under discussion. In the sphere of world affairs, national inter-dependence corresponds to individual liberty at home. As Bernard Shaw puts it : "Like democracy, national self-government is not for the good of the people : it is for the satisfaction of the people."

The British conception of liberty is linked with the realization that each individual person and each group of persons can and should lead more or less isolated lives which they can truly call their own. More or less : for it is obvious that men's lives depend a good deal on their inter-relationships. If love of liberty shall not lead to disruption and the paralysis of all social life, it must clearly be paired with certain other ideals.

Let me quote a passage from *This Torch of Freedom* by Stanley Baldwin, who understood so well to put into words the thoughts of the average Englishman : "Freedom without discipline soon degenerates into licence, by which many a state has perished. Discipline without freedom will make in time a nation of slaves. Freedom will give the spirit and discipline the responsibility ; and a people founded on these will themselves live and be the means of life-giving to others," Discipline, we may add, is the basis of free discussion ; and free discussion is the basis of democratic government.

Or we may approach the problem from a less political viewpoint. Here is another apt quotation, taken from Mr. George Santayana's *Soliloquies in England* : "England is the paradise of individuality, eccentricity, heresy, anomalies, hobbies and humour." True ; but at the same time England is the country of convention, good manners and, in some respects, of uniformity. The English can afford to tolerate, and even to like and cultivate, eccentricity and anomaly, because they know that on the whole they are a people who dislike nothing more than being conspi-

cuous. The people you meet in the streets are dressed alike, and behave and talk alike, one house is very much like another, one street like another, one town like another. While it is true that here you can voice your opinions more freely than in any other country—for there is no censorship in normal times—people seem to be less eager to express controversial beliefs. In other countries originality of thought is taken seriously, so seriously that the thinker is sometimes exterminated ; in England, originality of thought simply carries the suspicion of ill-breeding.

But all this is rather superficial. Discipline and a sense of propriety, certainly ; yet there is something more profound that enables the British people to avoid the dangers of individual liberty, just as they enjoy its blessings. To put it in one short sentence : the British are a religious people.

I know there are many who will contest this general statement. It is admitted that religious life was particularly intense in the Britain of old, but after the last war religion seemed to be losing its grip on the hearts of the people. Only a short while ago a friend who is serving in the forces told me that he was asked by a soldier from the West Indies why on earth Britain was called a Christian country ; to him it seemed that there were astoundingly few Christians about. This sad opinion is shared by many, but I do not agree. Perhaps it depends on what one means by religion.

When people complain that fewer persons go to church than could be wished, I can answer that the churches are not so empty as in most other countries. The Bible is perhaps not read so thoroughly and regularly now as it used to be in Victorian times ; yet I can testify that the number of people who have a very good knowledge of the Holy Book compares very well with the state of affairs elsewhere. The dignitaries of the Church are certainly not considered by the young generation as being above criticism ; but they are listened to with respect.

There is, too, the tradition of Britain's religious past, which lives on, as it were, under the surface. Puritanism, in its good and in its less obtrusive aspects, lives in the mentality of the present generation, even if it has ceased to be expressed in purely religious terms. If you enquire into the parentage of men and women prominent in art, literature, and public life, you will find that an astonishing number are descendants of clergymen ; some of them may not be practising Christians ; some may even be

atheists ; but in some subtle way, not easily defined, their spiritual heritage will show.

When I say that the British are a religious people I am not thinking in terms of dogma and ritual. I am thinking of the simple fact that the overwhelming majority of people in this country have preserved a vivid sense of moral values. They believe in the existence of laws which have not been made by man, and cannot be unmade by man; in commands which have to be, whether one's reason approves or not.

The Englishman has been described as a utilitarian. He is rather proud of what he calls his 'horse sense' ; when explaining his actions, he prefers arguments of expediency to arguments of sentiment. But I have always found that in the last analysis he leaves the ground of utilitarian reasoning and resorts to a simple : 'it is right to do this' or 'it would be wrong to do that ! '

This sense of moral values shows most strikingly in the field of politics. Politics are determined by the clash of differing self-interests, and the British least of all people would deny that they are looking after their interests as best they can. But in Britain this fact will never lead to a cynical attitude. Whenever public opinion becomes aware of the fact that a particular line of policy is unethical according to their own standards, British statesmen are forced to abandon that policy. A very striking example was the history of the so-called 'Hoare-Laval' plan which was regarded as a breach of faith towards the unlucky Empire of Abyssinia and the principles of the League of Nations. It is not relevant in this context whether public opinion was right or not ; nor do I want to enter into the question whether the proposed settlement would have been in the interest of the British nation. The important fact is that considerations of expediency played practically no part in the public discussion ; the issue was decided on its ethical merits. Or take the wholesale internment in 1940 of people in this country who were, technically, 'enemy aliens,' but were known to be, in their overwhelming majority, enemies of Nazism and Fascism and staunch adherents to the cause of the Allies. Under the first impact of the disastrous happenings in Belgium and France, the instinct of self-protection caused a popular outcry of 'intern the lot ! ' But very soon it was realized that it was morally wrong to rob innocent people of their liberty, and at the

very height of the danger of invasion the first steps were taken to remedy that wrong.

In this connection I should like to say a few words about the allegation of hypocrisy which is so often levelled against the British nation. From my personal experience I can but state that here there is certainly no greater number of hypocrites than in any other country ; and yet I think I can understand how the very wide-spread misconception was allowed to grow up.

Continental thought has developed a complete dualism of ethical values on the one, and ' practical ' or ' natural ' values on the other hand. It is supposed to be a very rare occurrence that a thing is useful and morally good at the same time—a happy coincidence on which you cannot rely. Man's actions are either based on his sense of rightness or motivated by personal or group egotism ; the two motives are mutually exclusive. The righteousness of a cause becomes at once suspect, if you so much as mention its probable usefulness. To combine the two justifications for your course of action is taken as proof that your interest in the ethical side of the question is merely pretended ; you are, in fact, accused of being a hypocrite.

This sharp distinction between two aspects of life—the natural and the moral—is quite alien to British mentality. People in this country have preserved their faith in the fundamental unity of God's creation. If what you do is in accordance with God's will—or, as others may prefer to express it, with the laws of Nature—it is bound to be useful as well as right. A morally good action is not ' tarnished ' by the fact that it is also designed to be in the material interests of the person who commits it ; on the contrary, its inherent rightness is all the more convincing.

I have cited two instances of many, when political issues were decided by ethical considerations. But in such cases it is not really true to say that expediency is sacrificed on the altar of righteousness. What in fact happens is this : once people are convinced that something they did was wrong, they begin to lose their faith in its usefulness, too ; they suspect that what seemed to be expedient may on closer examination be as harmful to their interests as it is unethical, and they will convince themselves that the course of action on which they have eventually decided will be right and beneficial at the same time. The Englishman is unashamedly proud of his success, because he finds it difficult to believe that anyone could be continually successful if he did not act

in conformity with natural laws—and that means, with the laws of morality as well. This, to the mind of some foreigners, is proof of hypocrisy, complacency and self-righteousness ; but it is in truth the result of an implicit faith in the oneness of the universe ; in the unity of Law and Nature.

Something rather similar can be observed in the realm of Art. The theories of 'pure art,' as distinct from Nature, have never succeeded in striking root in English soil. In so far as art is the opposite to natural expression it does not appeal to the English as a nation ; in fact, the word 'artistic' is to many almost synonymous with 'artificial.' The allegation that the English are less gifted artistically than other nations is blatantly untrue. But it is true that art is less respected in this than in many other countries of otherwise inferior culture. The fact that England has produced the greatest dramatic genius of all times—for Shakespeare has no equal—but is still without a national theatre where serious drama could be encouraged without undue regard to monetary considerations, is very significant.

Here, as in so many other spheres of life, the British put their faith in growth rather than in conscious creation. Indeed, it cannot be denied that sometimes this faith is made an excuse for complete passivity where action would be necessary. The belief that 'everything will be all right if only you leave it alone,' combined with the Englishman's love of independence, has led to the less pleasing aspects of British own-development, to the too unsystematic state of primary education, and to the dangerous neglect of the country's defences prior to the outbreak of war. But on the whole, the British nation has no reason to regret her trust in the ways of Nature. That instinct which warns the British against the excesses of intellectual planning, will always prevent them from committing the error of excessive inactivity ; for both would be equally 'unnatural.'

The British idea of liberty ; a lively sense of moral values ; intimate spiritual contact with the laws of nature ; these are, I believe, the mainspring from which the imposing power of national strength is derived. This three-fold inspiration pervades the daily lives of the British people, and it also determines the character of their social and political institutions. It has always seemed senseless to me to enquire whether monarchical principles are generally the best imaginable, or whether the British Empire system should be copied in other parts of the globe. The

British have succeeded in evolving a system of government which conforms with the fundamental aims that are alive in the soul of the people. That is the secret of its success, and in that respect—only in that respect—it is an example from which all the nations of the earth can learn with benefit.

THE KING AND THE WAR

THE YEAR 1938 IS PERHAPS ONE OF THE MOST fateful years in recent history. The danger of war had steadily grown from the day when Adolf Hitler seized power in Germany ; war now became a certainty, although this was not realized by all at the time. In 1938 Austria was annexed without serious resistance by anyone ; Czechoslovakia was dismembered ; Russia was alienated from the Western Powers, and the prestige of Britain as well as France sank to an unprecedentedly low level. There seemed to be no obstacles in the way towards world hegemony for the leaders of Germany, and they were not the people to miss what they believed to be their opportunity. In June of that fateful year, the King and Queen paid a State visit to the French Republic. The welcome accorded them by the population of Paris was more than cordial. The history of the *Entente Cordiale*, which had saved the world twenty-four years earlier, was frequently recalled in speeches and newspaper articles. Monsieur Lebrun, the French President, and his wife, with their simplicity and dignity of manner, were worthy counterparts of the British King and Queen.

There was no doubt about the friendship existing between France and Britain. In proposing the toast of Their Majesties, M. Lebrun exclaimed : "The friendship which unites our two peoples . . . has acquired, in the course of its development, the solidarity which can only be given by a conception of human values and an equal desire to face the different problems of national and international life in a broad spirit of comprehension . . . In the state of moral confusion from which the world is suffering, our two nations, equally devoted to human progress, are under great obligations."

The King, replying in French, said amongst other things : " In spite of the strip of sea which separates us, our two countries have seen their destinies inevitably drawn together with the passage of the centuries, and it would now be impossible to recall a period in which our relations were more intimate." Or another passage : " Our peoples have the same attachment to the democratic principles which are best suited to their natural genius, and we have the same belief in the benefits of individual liberty."

Monsieur and Madame Lebrun returned the visit in March 1939. . But even then forces were at work in France which succeeded in undermining the strength of the nation. Two years later, France collapsed before the German onslaught ; a treacherous government became a servile assistant to the aggressor, and the countries of France and Britain, if not their peoples, became almost enemies.

Events took their destined course. The Munich Conference sealed the fate of Czechoslovakia. The prospects of ' peace in our time ' soon proved to be imaginary. Pogroms of the Jews showed that Hitler made not even a pretence of moderation. In March 1939 Bohemia and Moravia were annexed and Slovakia became a German ' Protectorate.'

A campaign of threats against Poland was set on foot. Under the circumstances, the British attitude inevitably stiffened ; nobody doubted that war could break out at any moment.

It was in this atmosphere of tension that the King and Queen set out on their tour to Canada, for which they had received a formal invitation from the Canadian Government in the preceding year. In view of the international situation the King hesitated to go, leaving the decision to the Cabinet. But, as it was rightly assumed that nothing could be more beneficial to the cause of Empire unity than a Royal visit to one of the Dominions in this time of danger, it was decided to go on with the tour, especially as the King and Queen were also to visit the United States.

The Canadian people laid particular stress on the fact that it was their King—the King of Canada—whose visit they expected. On their Majesties arrival at Ottawa they were solemnly enthroned in the Senate House of the Parliament Buildings.

On Empire Day, May 24th, the King broadcast a message to all the peoples of the Empire. His words are memorable : " We

often talk of the Old World and the New. It is one of the greatest qualities of the British Empire that it serves to link and harmonize the two. That part of the British realm which lies in Europe and in Asia looks back upon many centuries of civilized life and growth. That part of it which lies in America and Africa, and the two great sister nations of Australia and New Zealand, have made their place in world society within the last hundred years." In view of his forthcoming visit to the United States the following passage was significant : " Canada and the United States have had to dispose of searching differences of aims and interests during the past hundred years, but never has one of those differences been resolved by force or by threats. No man, thank God ! will ever again conceive of such arbitrament between the peoples of my Empire and the people of the United States, and the faith in reason and fair play which we share with them is one of the chief ideals that guide the British Empire in all its ways to-day."

The short visit of the King and Queen to Washington was an outstanding success. A considerable amount of anti-British feeling had existed in the United States. The disputes over the payment of war debts ; elaborate German propaganda ; the isolationist tendencies prevalent amongst the population ; last, not least, the blunders of certain British officials who failed to understand the mood of the American people—all these and other factors had the effect that the forthcoming Royal Visit had a "bad press." It went so far that one newspaper had to admonish its fellow journals : " We have got company coming. So let's act as hosts should act, and not as if we were afraid they might go south with the silverware."

How completely the personal appearance of the King and Queen, their charm and unexpected lack of formality captured the population of Washington and New York, was summed up by the *New York Daily Mirror* in the following words : " He came - We saw - He conquered : is the short, short story of King George and his charming Queen." When, in the dark days after the fall of France, the eyes of a Britain that was fighting with her back to the wall were hopefully directed towards the New World, when German propaganda exploiting the Americans' natural inclination to isolationism tried to stir up anti-British sentiments, King George must have felt thankful that he had not postponed his visit to the American Continent.

Meanwhile, Hitler had intensified his propaganda campaign against Poland. The British Ambassador at Berlin was rebuffed when he suggested practical and fair solutions for the existing problems. Hitler was completely intransigent: History will show whether he was convinced that Britain would not fight or whether he did not fear her intervention. However that may be, he invaded Poland on September 1st, 1939, without making any declaration of war. For Britain, of course no further hesitation was possible. Her obligation to come to the assistance of the Poles was clear. Unless Hitler accepted the Franco-British ultimatum and withdrew his troops from Polish territory—and of course no one believed that he would do so—war was imminent. The King kept in closest touch with the happenings of those eventful days. Let those who maintain that the King's functions are mere formalities carefully study his activities during the war. No doubt, there are formal functions, and they are necessary and beneficial. To set an example in courage and sacrifice, to honour those who have deserved well of their country, and to cheer those who have suffered, are some of the most important tasks of Royalty in wartime. But besides this, the King has a right to be instantly informed of all important events and decisions, and he has the duty to aid his responsible Ministers with advice and moral support. But let facts speak for themselves.

On August 30th, Lord Halifax, then Foreign Secretary, had an audience of the King at Buckingham Palace, lasting about an hour. Later in the evening, the King, accompanied by the Duke of Kent, visited the Admiralty, as he had visited other Departments before. He was awaited by Lord Stanhope, first Lord of the Admiralty, and Admiral of the Fleet the late Sir Dudley Pound; he inspected the arrangements which had been made in preparation for an emergency.

On the following day, the Archbishop of Canterbury paid a tribute to the Throne in the House of Lords. He said that "it was almost impossible for the imagination to realize the gravity of this fateful hour. Their thoughts must turn to the King, called at the very beginning of his reign, like his father—a reign begun with such high promise—to be the head of the nation at what might be a time of bitter trial. From that House, and the whole country, there would rise the resolute loyalty by which he would be fortified and sustained."

On the same day, the Royal Assent was given, before the session of Parliament was adjourned, to sixteen Bills framed for "securing the public safety, the defence of the realm, the maintenance of public order and the efficient prosecution of any war in which his Majesty may be engaged." At a meeting of the Privy Council at Buckingham Palace, the King signed an Order in Council, effecting the complete mobilization of the Army and the Royal Air Force. He also gave his signature to a proclamation which declared that, in effect, the Navy was completely mobilized. The King further proclaimed a State of Emergency in the following words : " My Lords, I declare that the present state of public affairs and the extent of the demands on my military forces for the protection of the interests of the Empire constitute a case of great emergency within the meaning of the Statutes severally enabling me in that behalf."

As Mr. Chamberlain, the Prime Minister, was very anxious to acquaint the King in detail with all the latest developments in a swift-moving situation but could not leave Downing Street for long, the King went by motor car to the Premier's home and gave him an audience of over half an hour. When he left, he received an ovation from a quickly assembled crowd ; the incident was reported by *The Times* as follows : " A roar of cheering went up in Downing Street yesterday afternoon and rolled out into Whitehall The King had arrived to pay a call on his Prime Minister, and he was clearly touched by the warmth and loyalty of which the ringing cheers of the crowd were an eloquent expression."

On September 3rd, when the ultimatum had expired, Britain and France took up the challenge. In the evening the King broadcast a message to his people at home and his peoples across the seas, asking them to stand calm, firm and united. He said :

" In this grave hour, perhaps the most fateful in our history, I send to every household of my peoples, both at home and overseas, this message, spoken with the same depth of feeling for each one of you as if I were able to cross your threshold and speak to you myself. For the second time in the lives of most of us we are at war. Over and over again we have tried to find a peaceful way out of the differences between ourselves and those who are now our enemies. But it has been in vain. We have been forced into a conflict. For we are called, with our allies, to meet the challenge of a principle which, if it were to prevail, would be

fatal to any civilized order in the world. It is the principle which permits a State, in the selfish pursuit of power, to disregard its treaties, and its solemn pledges ; which sanctions the use of force, or threat of force, against the Sovereignty and independence of other States. Such a principle, stripped of all disguise, is surely the mere primitive doctrine that might is right ; and if this principle were established throughout the world, the freedom of our own country and of the whole British Commonwealth of Nations would be in danger. But far more than this—the peoples of the world would be kept in the bondage of fear, and all hopes of settled peace and of security of justice and liberty among nations would be ended. This is the ultimate issue that confronts us. For the sake of all that we ourselves hold dear, and of the world's order and peace, it is unthinkable that we should refuse to meet the challenge. It is to this high purpose that I now call my people at home and my peoples across the seas, who will make our cause their own. I ask them to stand calm, firm and united in this time of trial. The task will be hard. There may be dark days ahead, and war can no longer be confined to the battlefields. But we can only do the right as we see the right and reverently commit our cause to God. If, one and all, we keep resolutely faithful to it, ready for whatever service or sacrifice it may demand, then, with God's help, we shall prevail. May He bless and keep us all."

I have, myself, seen the effect which this message had in many English homes. Looking backward, it now seems so clear that war could not have been avoided ; but it was not so clear to everybody at the time. The people of Britain did not want war. There were still many who believed that it was foolish, and possibly wicked, to enter a conflict which, so they thought, concerned the Germans and the Poles alone. No declaration by a politician, even the most exalted and most trustworthy, could have convinced those people that going to war at that moment was 'the right thing to do.' But the King's message did ! At no time had the moral authority of the British Crown demonstrated its reality so clearly as now. The ancient tradition of the Throne, combined with the great personal popularity of the reigning Monarch and his Queen, was at that critical moment able to exert a deeper spiritual influence than the call of patriotism alone, or even the sanction of the highest dignitaries of the Church, could have done.

With the consent of the King, a copy of his message, bearing his signature in facsimile, was sent to every household.

During the whole month of September the King did not rest from the ever-increasing demands on his time and labour. I will only give some instances in order to show how closely the King's work was connected with the defensive activities of the country. On September 7th the King was with his troops at Aldershot. The visit was planned in such a way that he could see as many troops as possible; but the time of manoeuvres, when everything could be arranged to suit a Royal visitor, was passed: no training, or other work in connection with the mobilization, was suspended. The King who, for the first time in the war, wore the service-dress uniform of a field-marshall, was wildly cheered by the men, many of whom were soon to show their indomitable spirit during the trying experiences in the mountains of Norway and on the beaches of Dunkirk. A few days later, the King, as King of Canada, signed a duplicate copy of Canada's war proclamation. On the 12th, the King and Queen inspected air-raid shelters in Bermondsey. Later the King received the Home Secretary, with whom he discussed problems of the Home Front. Three days later, the King, again accompanied by the Queen, visited the docks as Master of the Merchant Navy and Fishing Fleets. Few people then realized the important, if not decisive rôle which the men of the Merchant Navy were to play when, on their efficiency and courage, depended not only the maintenance of British power in the East, and the support she could give to her Russian allies, but also the very upkeep of her home defences and the feeding of her citizens.

On September 27th, the King and Queen again inspected Army units in training. Throughout the war he insisted on keeping in the closest touch with the Army. His visits to Army units were numerous, culminating in his historic visit to the Middle-East Forces after their smashing African victory and on the eve of the invasion of Sicily.

For the first time during the war, a Day of National Prayer was observed on October 1st. The King and Queen attended the morning service at St. Paul's and led their people in prayer for victory. The Day of National Prayer has proved to be a great spiritual comfort to many, particularly during the first years of the war when hearts were often downcast.

One of the many significant gestures, which was reported by all newspapers, was the paying-off of the crew of the Royal yacht, *Victoria and Albert*, for 'the duration.' This was in accordance with the precedent set in the last war, when the yacht's officers and crew were transferred to one of the ships of the Grand Fleet and continued 'on active service' throughout hostilities. This time, instead of being sent to one ship, they were distributed among the ships of the Fleet.

On October 7th, the first occasion presented itself to the King for an inspection of the Home Fleet, with which he stayed for two days. His mind must have been filled with memories of his own service with the Grand Fleet during the last war. Like his father, the King is truly a 'sailor King' who has always preserved a particular affection for the Navy, with which he had spent so many happy days of his youth. After the inspection the King visited an aerodrome of the Fleet Air Arm, in order to decorate several airmen who had already distinguished themselves. It will be remembered that for a short time in the last war the King had been an officer of the Royal Naval Air Force.

On that occasion, the King showed himself deeply interested in the story which was told him by a veteran of eighty-five who in his person represented a not inconsiderable part of British military history. He had fought at Tel-el-Kebir; he had taken part in Lord Robert's famous march from Kabul to Kandahar; he had seen active service in South Africa through the whole length of the Boer War, and he had finally not been too old to serve in the war of 1914-18.

But enough! I could go on without interruption for hours, recalling the countless tasks which the King performed during the whole course of the war into its fourth year, and which no doubt he will continue to perform. King George VI has not spared himself in working for his country. In all these years the King and his Queen have been inseparable from the life of the nation. We have seen them again and again, inspecting troops, ships and aeroplanes; we have seen them in armament factories; with the splendid units of the Women's Forces; at balloon-barrage and A.A. battery stations; visiting the Red Cross and military hospitals; with evacuated children and with air-raid casualties; the King has visited the Dominion Houses and invested the heroes of battle-field and Home Front with the orders and medals they have earned.

On Empire Day in 1940, the King spoke the following words : " Let no one think that my confidence is dimmed, when I tell you how perilous is the ordeal which we are facing. On the contrary it shines in my heart as brightly as it shines in yours ; but confidence alone is not enough. It must be armed with courage and resolution, with endurance and self-sacrifice."

The King has acted in accordance with his words, and the nation knows it. What a blunder the Germans made when they bombed Buckingham Palace, which the King and Queen had refused to leave in the hour of danger. The British people were not even very angry. This crude attempt at terror made them smile and added to their confidence. No one could frighten their King !

Previously, on November 12th, 1939, two messages were sent by the King. One was a birthday greeting to the King of Italy, who celebrated his 70th birthday. We did not then know that his country would commit the incredible folly of entering the war without any provocation. The second was a reply to the offer of mediation made by Queen Wilhelmina and King Leopold on November 7th. The King recalled that the aim of the peoples of the British Empire was to redeem Europe " from perpetually recurring fear of German aggression " and stated that if Germany made any proposals which afforded real prospects of this, they would receive earnest consideration from his Government.

On the same day the Queen broadcast a message to the women of the Empire from Buckingham Palace. She emphasized the vital part which women had to play. " Many of you have had to see your family life broken up . . . The King and I know what it means to be parted from our children . . . We put our trust in God who is our refuge and strength in all times of trouble."

The new session of Parliament was opened by the King, accompanied by the Queen, on November 28th. The ceremony was shorn of its customary pageantry, as was fitting in times of war. In his speech the King said :

" My Lord and Members of the House of Commons : The prosecution of the war commands the energies of all my subjects. My Dominions Overseas are participating wholeheartedly and with an effectiveness which is most gratifying to me. Throughout the world my Navies, together with the Merchant Navy and the Fishing Fleets, are keeping free and open the highways of the sea. At home, in France and in all stations overseas, my Armies

and Air Forces are fulfilling their tasks. I am well assured that they will be equal to any efforts and sacrifices to which they may be called.

"*Members of the House of Commons : You will be asked to make further financial provision for the conduct of the war. My Lords and Members of the House of Commons : Grave responsibilities rest upon you at this time. You will, I am convinced, express the resolution of the nation. The measures which will be submitted to you are such as seem necessary to my Advisers for the welfare of my people and the attainment of the purpose upon which all our efforts are set. I pray that Almighty God will give His blessing to your counsels."*

It was the time of the 'phoney war.' Poland was overrun, and the Western Powers were unable to help. Nerves were taut. The British Expeditionary Force in France was impatiently waiting for action, little knowing with what heavy odds they would eventually be faced. The King inspected the troops in France and had lunch with the French President behind the lines. British strategy seemed paralysed. In some neutral countries people thought that the main combatants would never come to grips. A stalemate seemed imminent. But all the time Germany was preparing for her big blow, and Britain was furiously trying to make up for the past neglect of her defences. Here nobody believed that the war would remain 'phoney.' Britain was waiting.

Something of this mood was reflected in the King's Christmas Message. Here are some passages from His Majesty's broadcast:

"The festival which we know as Christmas is above all a festival of peace and of the home. Among all free peoples the love of peace is profound, for this alone gives security to the home. But true peace is in the hearts of men, and it is the tragedy of this time that there are powerful countries whose whole direction and policy are based on aggression and the suppression of all that we hold dear for mankind . . . To everyone in this great Fleet I send a message of gratitude . . . The same message I send to the gallant Air Force, which, in co-operation with the Navy, is our sure shield of defence . . . I would send a special word of greeting to the Armies of the Empire, to those who have come afar, and in particular to the British Expeditionary Force. Their task is hard . . . All are members of a great Family of Nations which is prepared to sacrifice everything that freedom of

spirit may be saved to the world . . . A new year is at hand. We cannot tell what it will bring. If it brings peace, how thankful we shall be. If it brings us continued struggle we shall remain undaunted.

"In the meantime I think that we shall all find a message of encouragement in the lines, which, in my closing words, I would like to say to you : 'I said to the man who stood at the Gate of the Year, " Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown." And he replied : " Go out into the darkness, and put your hand into the Hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.' "

"May that Almighty Hand guide and uphold us all."

The new year, alas, brought no peace. Instead, it brought the gravest danger which this country had ever known. Disaster followed disaster. The campaign in Norway ended in failure. Holland was overrun. The King of Norway and Queen Wilhelmina of Holland had to flee their countries and found refuge in England. Belgium was invaded. The Germans broke through the Maginot Line near Sedan. The Belgian Army surrendered, leaving the French and British Armies in an almost hopeless situation. The B.E.F. fought gallantly in a position whose dangerous character must have been clear to every soldier. On May 30th the King sent this message to his troops in France : " All our countrymen have been following with pride and admiration the courageous resistance of the British Expeditionary Force during the continuous fighting of the last fortnight. Placed by-circumstances outside their control in a position of extreme difficulty, they are displaying a gallantry that has never been surpassed in the annals of the British Army. The hearts of everyone of us at home are with you and your magnificent troops in this hour of peril."

For a few short days it seemed as if, to use the words of Mr. Churchill, 'the greatest military disaster in our long history' would befall the country. It was feared that not more than twenty or thirty thousand men could be evacuated. But the miracle of Dunkirk happened : the B.E.F. was safely brought home. In a message to the Services, addressed to the Prime Minister, the King said :

" I wish to express my admiration of the outstanding skill and bravery shown by the three Services and the Merchant Navy in the evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force from Northern

France. So difficult an operation was only made possible by brilliant leadership and an indomitable spirit among all ranks of Force. The measure of its success—greater than we had dared to hope—was due to the unfailing support of the Royal Air Force and in the final stages the tireless efforts of naval units of every kind.

“While we acclaim this great feat in which our French Allies, too, have played so noble a part, we think with heartfelt sympathy of the loss and sufferings of those brave men whose self-sacrifice has turned disaster into triumph.”

On the next day he said in a message to France :

“Our armies of the North, fighting side by side, have . . . come through an ordeal that has proved their courage, discipline and fighting power . . . We sympathise in the losses that France has sustained, but recognize in them the measure of French heroism and devotion.”

But the French Army’s power of resistance had been broken. On June 16th the Reynaud Cabinet resigned, and Marshal Petain formed his new Government and sued for an armistice. Hostilities in France ceased. Britain stood alone !

It was always my opinion that the present war was, from the beginning, to an unusual extent a war of morale. Germany could not hope to conquer if not by a moral collapse brought about in the first stages of the *blitzkrieg*. When France fell, it seemed that complete success was imminent. If Britain had wavered then, the incredible would have happened : Hitler would have been master of the world.

But Britain did not waver. The British people, realizing the full extent of the danger, did not lose confidence. They had a spiritual head, the King, of whom they were proud and whom they loved. They had a great leader, Winston Churchill. They had fighting men who had no equals.

Invasion threatened, but in the Battle of Britain the enemy’s boosted Air Force was beaten, and the danger was averted. But night after night the enemy’s bombers were over England, and the people of Britain suffered as they had never suffered before.

But when Christmas approached, British hearts were not downcast. In that year of trial Britain had found her soul. If the enemy had not already conquered her, he would conquer her never. There were solid reasons for confidence in spite of the grimness of the situation. In Africa, British arms were taking the

initiative. The United States, full of admiration for Britain's heroism, became more active in their sympathy. The Empire's own power was growing daily.

On Christmas day the King broadcast a message of hope and sober confidence in victory. He expressed the wish that the new unity which the nation had found in common peril would be carried forward into the years of peace. It was a speech whose quiet courage and dignified delivery stood in marked contrast to the bombastic orations of the leading Nazis. In spite of everything, the King was already looking into a better future, "when everyone will be at home together." He ended : "The future will be hard, but our feet are planted on the path of victory and, with the help of God, we shall make our way to justice and to peace."

In 1941 the tide turned. German air raids on London and the interior of England grew fewer and finally ceased. Greece and Crete were lost, but the Italian Army in Libya and the Italian Navy were crippled. Armament production in Britain and in the Empire grew to enormous proportions. The Royal Navy kept the sea-lanes open. From America a steady flow of supplies was received. Glorious summer weather promised a good harvest. Then, suddenly, Germany attacked Russia.

Russia as ally of Britain. A few years earlier one would have thought it impossible. The fear of the Comintern was still strong in Britain, but not for a moment did the British people hesitate to accept the Russians as comrades-in-arms without reservation. A nation less sure of herself than Britain might have been reluctant to link her destinies too closely with another whose philosophy she repudiated. But Britain, conscious of her inherent strength, unity and moral greatness, symbolized in the person of the King, had no such qualms.

The titanic struggle between the two largest armies known to history began. The Russians were forced to yield large territories. The Ukraine was conquered. The Germans closed in on Moscow and Leningrad. But Leningrad stood the siege, and before Moscow the Germans were decisively beaten. In the Battle of Britain they had suffered their first big defeat ; this was their second.

Japan, Germany's partner in the Far East, struck. America was drawn into the war. Britain had a new enemy who threatened her Far Eastern possessions and was a danger to India

and Australia. But she had also gained a new and powerful ally. Nobody in Britain doubted any longer that the war would ultimately be won by the Allies.

Again at Christmas the King broadcast to his Empire :

"I am glad to think millions of my people in all parts of the world are listening to me now. From my own home, with the Queen and my children beside me, I send to all a Christmas greeting.

"Christmas is the festival of home, and it is right that we should remember those who this year must spend it away from home. I am thinking, as I speak; of the men who have come from afar, standing ready to defend the old homeland, of the men who in every part of the world are serving the Empire and its cause with such valour and devotion by sea, land and in the air. I am thinking of all those, women and girls as well as men, who at the call of duty have left their homes to join the Services or to work in factory, hospital or field. To each of you, wherever your duty may be, I send my remembrance and my sincere good wishes for you and for yours.

"I do not forget what others have done and are doing so bravely and so well in Civil Defence. My heart is also with those who are suffering—the wounded, the bereaved, the anxious, the prisoners of war. I think you know how deeply the Queen and I feel for them. May God give them comfort and courage and hope.

"All these separations are part of the hard sacrifice which this war demands. It may well be that it will call for even greater sacrifices. If this is to be, let us face them cheerfully together. I think of you, my peoples, as one great family, for that is how we are learning to live. We all belong to each other. We all need each other. It is in serving each other and in sacrificing for our common good that we are finding our true life. In that spirit we shall win the war, and in that same spirit we shall win for the world after the war a true and lasting peace. The greatness of any nation is in the spirit of its people ; so it has always been since history began ; so it shall be with us.

"The range of the tremendous conflict is ever widening. It now extends to the Pacific Ocean. Truly, it is a stern and solemn time. But as the war widens, so surely our conviction deepens of the greatness of our cause.

"We who belong to the present generation must bear the brunt

of the struggle. And I would say to the coming generation—the boys and girls of to-day—the men and women of to-morrow—train yourselves in body, mind, and spirit, so as to be ready for whatever part you may be called to play, and for the tasks which will await you as citizens of the Empire when the war is over.

"We must all, older and younger, resolve that, having been entrusted with so a great cause, then, at whatever cost, God helping us, we will not falter or fail. Make yourselves ready—in your home and school—to give and to offer your very best.

"We are coming to the end of another hard-fought year. During those months, our people have been through many trials, and in that true humility which goes hand in hand with valour have learned once again to look for strength to God alone. So—I bid you all—be strong and of good courage. Go forward into this coming year with a good heart. Lift up your hearts with thankfulness for deliverance from dangers in the past. Lift up your hearts in confidence that strength will be given you to overcome whatever perils may be ahead until the victory is won.

"If the skies before us are still dark and threatening there are stars to guide us on our way. Never did heroism shine more brightly than it does now. Nor neighbourly kindness. And with them—brightest of all stars—is our faith in God. These stars will we follow with His help until the light shall shine and the darkness shall collapse. May God bless you, everyone!"

The New Year began with the signing of the Twenty-six Nations' Pact in Washington. The war had now truly become a world war. The civilized forces of the world began to gather, and their unity spelt doom for the Axis power. But the year 1942 commenced with many disappointments.

The Japanese onslaught was of unbelievable momentum. The American Navy, crippled by the treacherous attack on Pearl Harbour, was unable to prevent Japanese troop movements in the Pacific Ocean. On February 15th the Japanese occupy Singapore after a lightning campaign. A fortnight later the Allies lose five cruisers and six destroyers in the battle of the Java Sea. In March Rangoon falls, and the British garrison withdraws from the Andaman Islands. On April 5th India is bombed for the first time. General Wainwright's forces on Bataan Peninsula are forced to surrender after stubborn resistance. H.M.S. *Dorsetshire*, *Cornwall* and *Hermes* are sunk by Japanese aircraft.

The Japanese threat has important political repercussions. The

Australians become anxious, and some criticism against the central direction of the war in London is advanced. The sentiment is easy to understand. While Australian soldiers are fighting for the common cause far away from home, Australia herself seems to be inadequately protected against the attack which is considered imminent. The loss of the Malay Peninsula with Singapore has again lowered Britain's military prestige which had soared high at the time of the Battle of Britain and during General Wavell's successful campaign in North Africa. It was not understood then that Britain was gathering strength for decisive blows ; was forced to husband her still inadequate means carefully. Plans for wresting the initiative from the Axis powers were made, but could not be publicized for obvious reasons.

In India, also threatened with attack, the political tension increases. The British Government's proposals, promising in effect full Dominion Status after the war, are rejected. Immediate autonomy is demanded, but this cannot be granted in view of the military situation. A deadlock, much regretted in Britain, ensues.

In North Africa, too, things had not been going too well. In the first month of the year British forces had advanced again as far as Benghazi, but General Rommel's counter blow brought the Germans to Derna by February 4th.

The Russian winter offensive, which had been eminently successful, ended in May. During the summer months the Germans regained the initiative.

In June and July the fortune of the Allies was at the lowest ebb. The British suffered a heavy defeat in the Libyan fighting. While Mr. Churchill conferred with the American President at Washington, Tobruk fell and the Germans advanced fifty miles across the Egyptian frontier. For the first time during the war a vote of censure was moved in the House of Commons.

In Russia the Germans advanced on Stalingrad ; Hitler confidently promised its fall.

Yet before the year was ended, the situation had again completely changed. In North Africa the Germans were being chased across the desert by General Montgomery's Eighth Army after the heavy defeat at El Alamein. On the Russian front, the German Sixth Army was annihilated before Stalingrad and a general Russian offensive, stronger even than that of the year

before, was under way. The Japanese had lost the initiative in the Pacific. Britain continued, with ever-growing force, her bomber offensive against German territory. Final victory was more certain than ever ; possibly it could be achieved in 1943 ?

When King George sent his Christmas message of 1942, he could be confident that the danger of defeat had passed.

This was the King's message :

" It is at Christmas more than at any other time that we are conscious of the dark shadow of war. Our Christmas festival to-day must lack many of the happy familiar features that it has had from our earliest childhood ; we miss the actual presence of some of those nearest and dearest, without whom our family gathering cannot be complete.

" But though its outward observances may be limited, the message of Christmas remains eternal and unchanged ; it is a message of thankfulness and of hope ; of thankfulness to the Almighty for his great mercies ; of hope for the return to this earth of peace and goodwill.

" In this spirit I wish all of you a happy Christmas. This year it adds to our happiness that we are sharing it with so many of our comrades in arms from the United States of America. We welcome them in our homes and their sojourn here will not only be a happy memory for us, but, I hope a basis of enduring understanding between our two peoples.

" The recent victories won by the United Nations enable me this Christmas to speak with firm confidence about the future. On the southern shores of the Mediterranean the First and Eighth Armies, our Fleets and Air Forces are advancing towards each other, heartened and greatly fortified by the timely and massive expeditionary armies of the United States. Tremendous blows have been struck by the armies of the Soviet Union, the effects of which cannot yet be measured on the minds and bodies of the German People. In the Pacific we watch with thrilled attention the counterstrokes of our Australian and American comrades. India, who is still threatened with Japanese invasion, has found in her loyal fighting men, more than a million strong, champions to stand at the side of the British Army in defence of Indian soil.

" We still have tasks ahead of us, perhaps harder even than those which we have already accomplished. We faced these with confidence, for to-day we stand together, no longer alone, no longer

ill-armed, but just as resolute as in the darkest hours to do our duty whatever comes.

“Many of you to whom I am speaking are far away overseas. You realize at first hand the importance and meaning of those outposts of Empire which the wisdom of our forefathers selected, and which your faithfulness will defend. For there was a danger that we should lose much ; and this has opened our eyes to the value of what we might have lost.

“You may be serving for the first time in Gibraltar, in Malta, in Cyprus, Ceylon or India. Perhaps you are listening to me from Aden or Syria, or Persia, or Madagascar, or the West Indies. Or you may be in the land of your birth, in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, or South Africa.

“Wherever you are serving in our wide free Commonwealth of Nations, you will always feel ‘at home.’ Though severed by the long sea-miles of distance, you are still in the family circle, whose ties, precious in peaceful years, have been built even closer by danger.

“The Queen and I feel most deeply for all of you who have lost or parted from your dear ones, and our hearts go out to you with sorrow, with comfort, but also with pride. We send a special message of remembrance to the wounded and the sick in the hospitals wherever they may be, and to the prisoners of war who are enduring their long exile with dignity and fortitude.

“Suffering and hardship shared together have given us a new understanding of each other’s problems. The lessons learned during the forty tremendous months behind us have taught us how to work together for victory, and we must see to it that we keep together after the war to build a worthier future.

“On our visits to war industries in every part of the country the Queen and I have watched with admiration the steady growth of that vital war production, the fruits of which are now being used by every branch of our Forces in all theatres of war.

“We are thankful for the splendid addition to our food supplies made by those who work on the land and who have made it fertile and prolific as it has never been before. Those of you who are carrying out this variety of duties so willingly undertaken in the service of your country will, I am sure, find new associations, new friendships, and new memories, long to be cherished in times of peace.

"So let us brace and prepare ourselves for the days which lie ahead. Victory will bring us even greater world responsibilities, and we must not be found unequal to a task in the discharge of which we shall draw on the store-house of our experience and tradition.

"Our European Allies, their Sovereigns, Heads and Governments, whom we are glad to welcome here in their distress, count on our aid to help them return to their native lands and to rebuild the structure of a free and glorious Europe.

"On the sea, on land, in the air, and in civil life at home, the pattern of effort and mutual service is being traced which may guide those who design the picture of our future society.

"A former President of the United States of America used to tell of a boy who was carrying an even smaller child up a hill. Asked whether the heavy burden was not too much for him, the boy answered - ' It's not a burden, it's my brother ! '

"So let us welcome the future in a spirit of brotherhood, and thus make a world in which, please God, all may dwell together in justice and peace."

The next time—this is our hope—when the quiet voice of King George VI with its unmistakable ring of deep sincerity speaks his Christmas message to his peoples over the air, Peace may reign again in the world. While these lines are being written, fresh victories have brought the Allies nearer to their goal. On the Eastern front the Russians have smashed a German summer offensive and have so far brilliantly succeeded in their own. The Axis forces have been driven from African soil. Sicily has been conquered, and Italy is on the verge of surrender. Germany is writhing under the onslaught from the air of the Royal Air Force and the American Air Armies stationed in Britain.

But even if our hopes are too sanguine and a further year be added to the years of war, the Allied Nations will not be impatient, for triumph is certain.

Then, when total victory secures the basis for a lasting peace, the nations of the world will remember the dark hours of that unforgettable year 1940, when Britain, fortified by the loyalty of her Empire, stood bleeding but upright in the path of the immensely powerful aggressor; and the nations will turn their eyes towards King George and his People with admiration and gratitude.

FROM OUR BOOK LIST

NOW OR NEVER

BY AIR COMMODORE HOWARD WILLIAMS

GLIDING AND SOARING

THE FLYING SOLDIER

BY MAJOR ALOIS SITEK AND FL/LIEUT. VERNON BLUNT

"THIS IS LONDON"

BY "JIMMY"

THOSE LITTLE ONES

BY MAVIS AXTELL

KING GEORGE VI AND HIS PEOPLE

HAAKON VII—NORWAY'S FIGHTING KING

QUEEN WILHELMINA—MOTHER OF THE
NETHERLANDS

CHIANG KAI-SHEK CARRIES ON

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'TIS PASSING STRANGE

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